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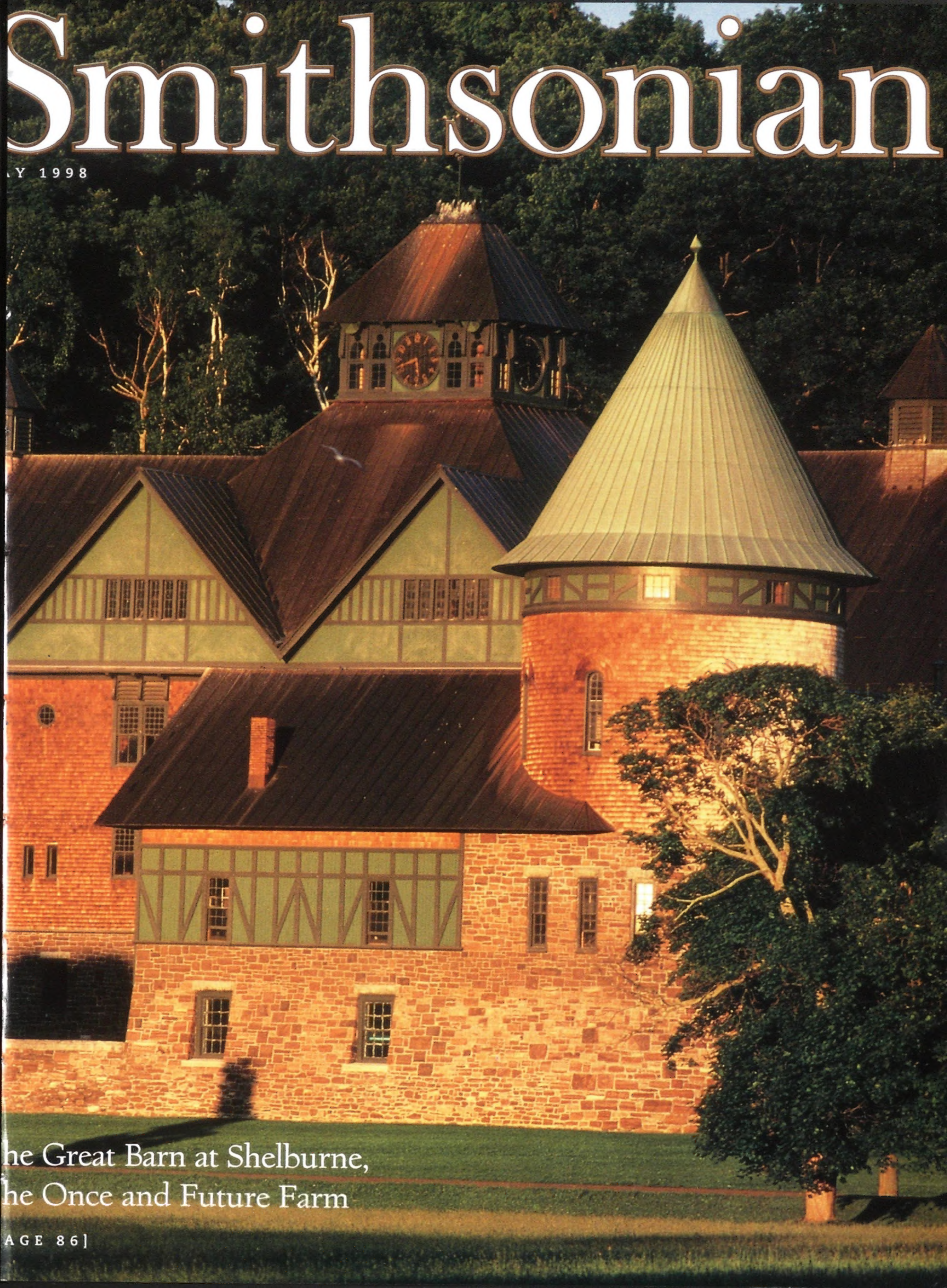

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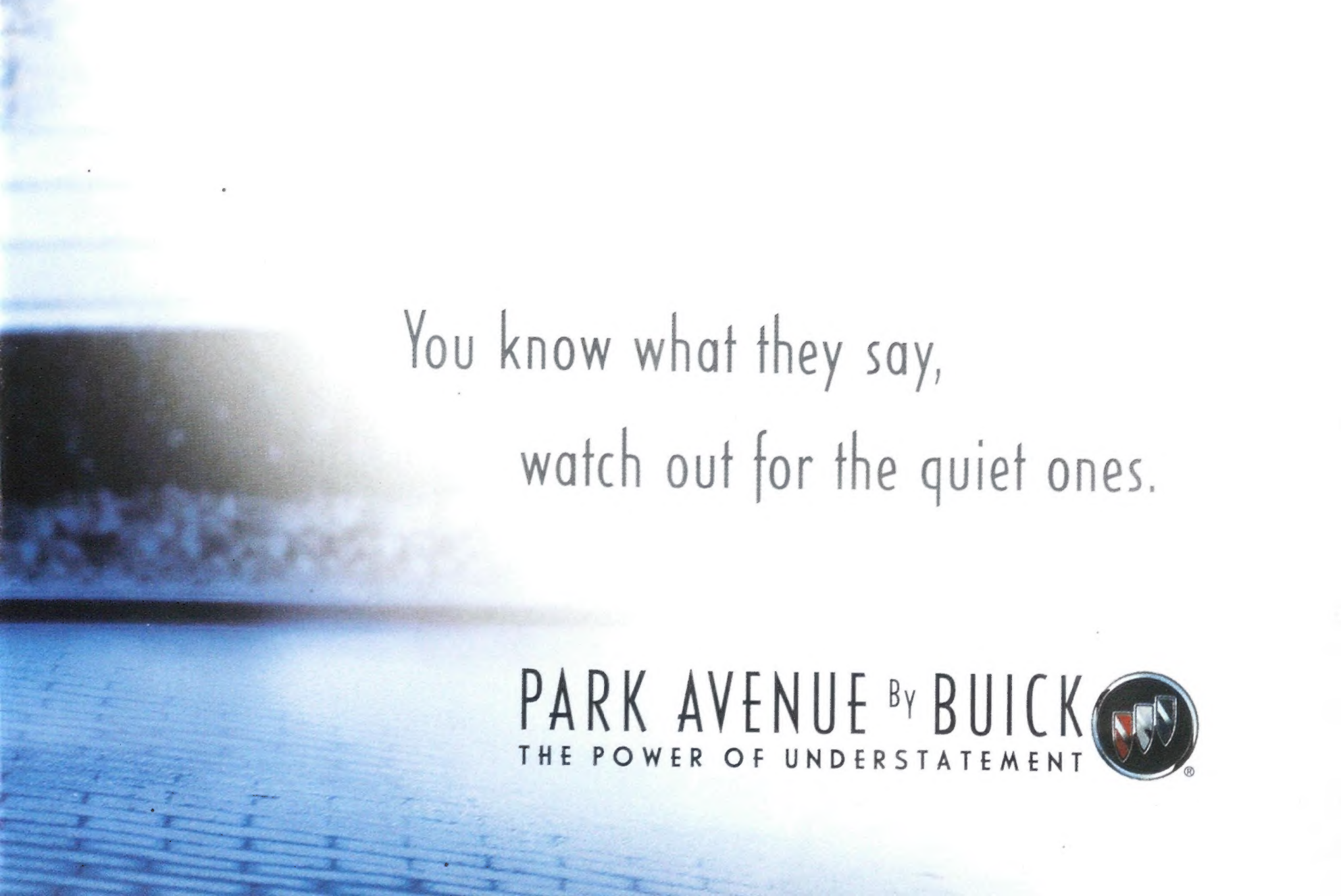
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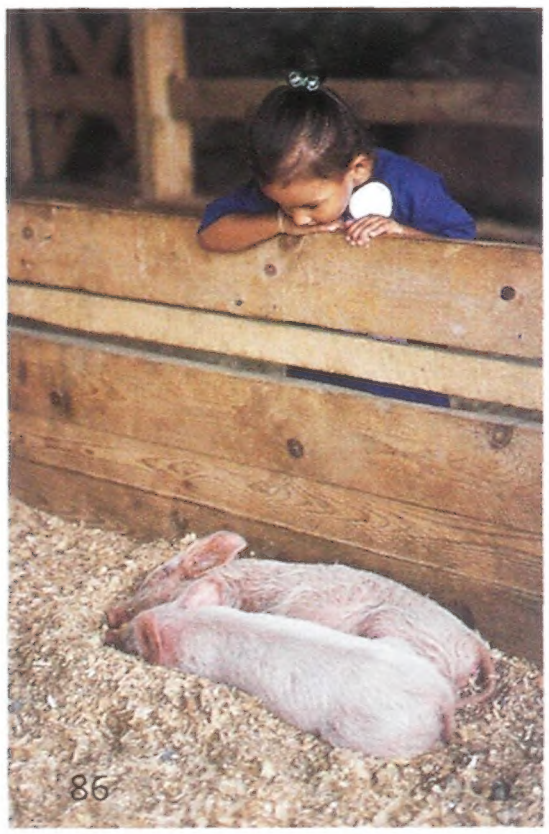

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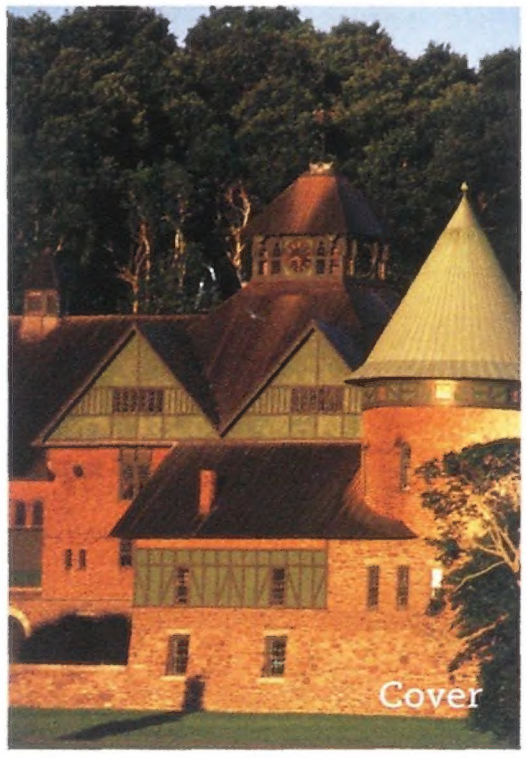

Cover Built between 1886 and 1890, the Farm Barn at Shelburne Farms in Vermont was a state-of-the-art agricultural facility and the estate headquarters. Renovation began in 1990, and today it houses the Education Center and the Children's Farmyard, a bakery, wood shop, cheese making center and school.
PHOTOGRAPH BY GAIL MOONEY

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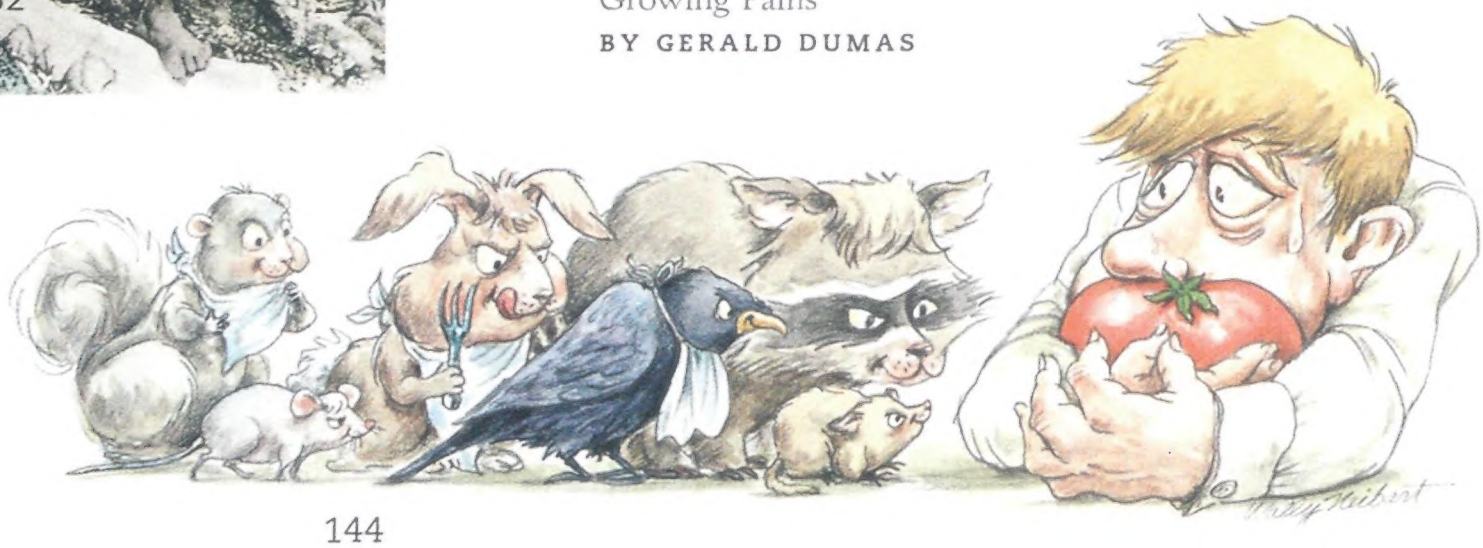

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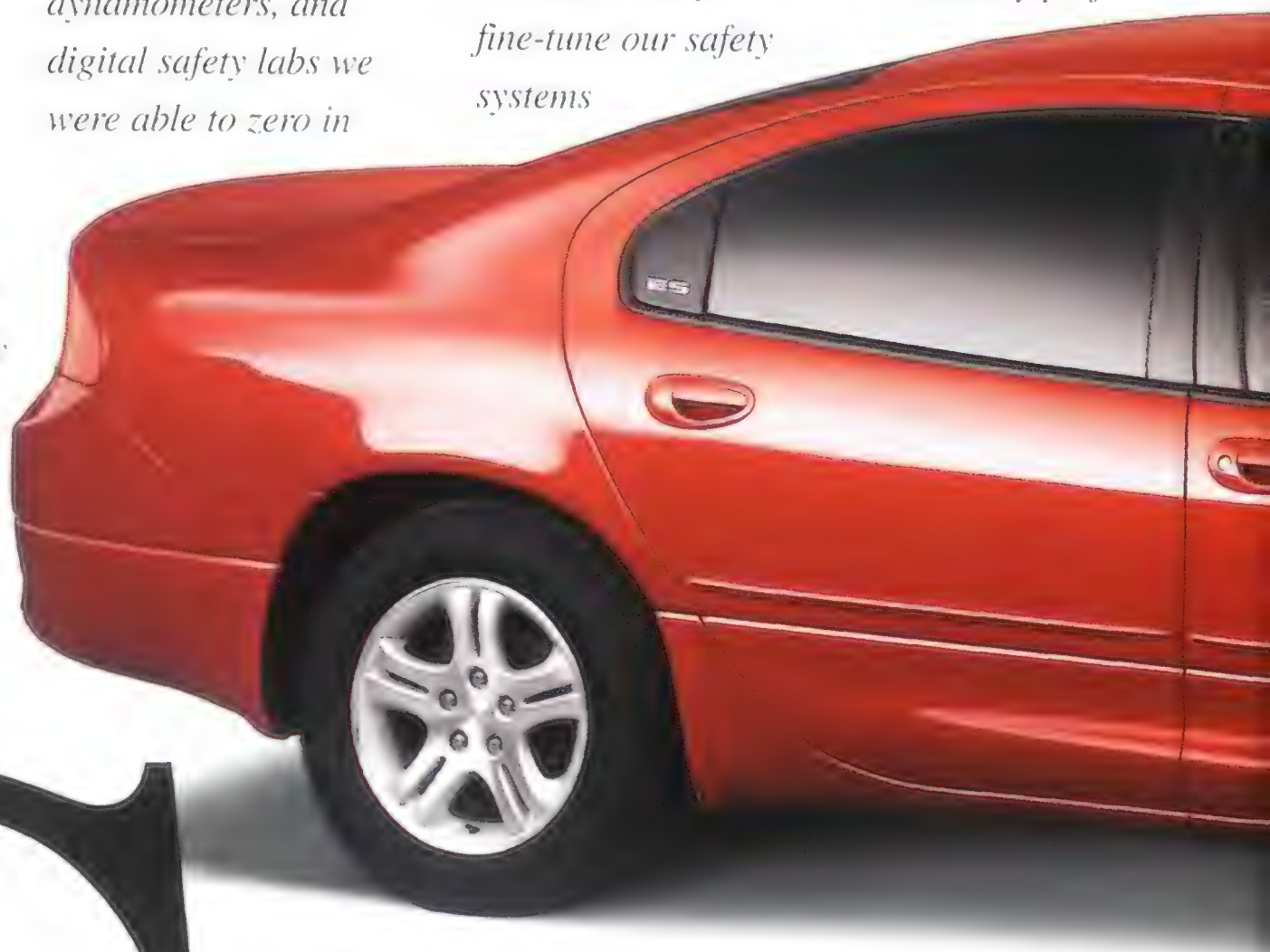

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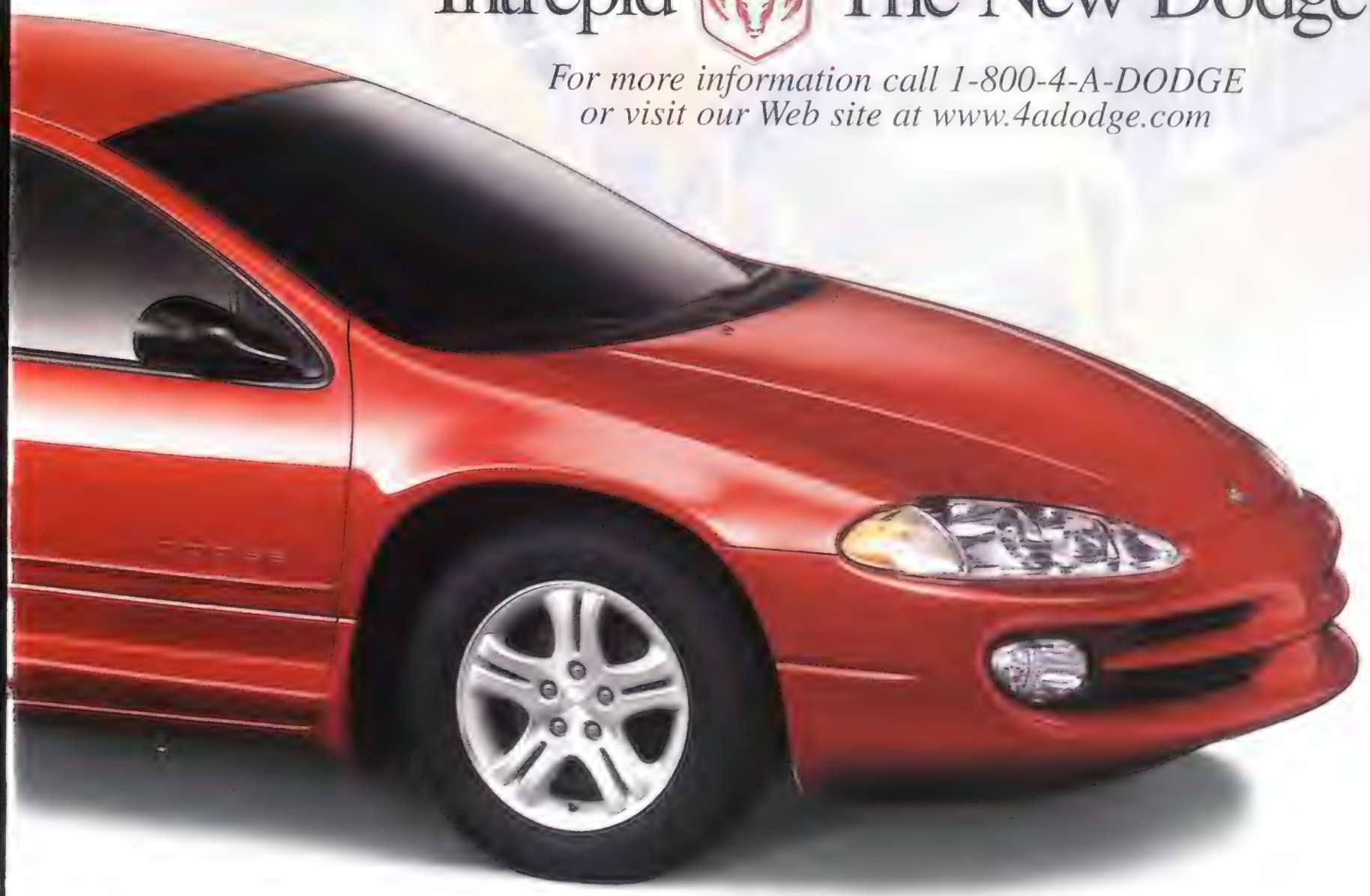

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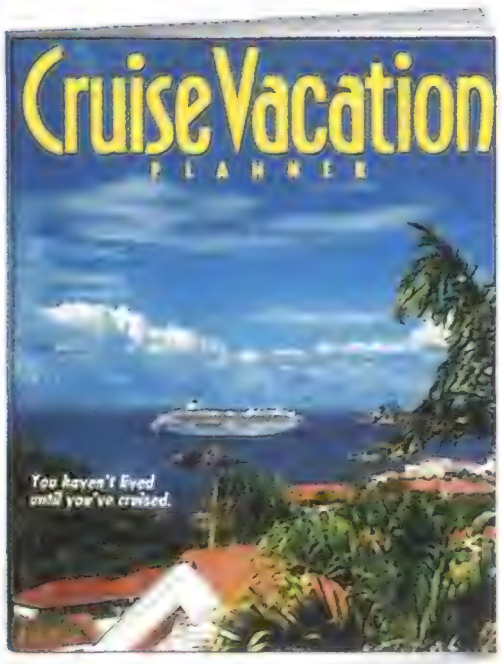

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www.smithsonianmag.si.edu

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1-800-766-2149
[outside of U.S., call 1-904-445-4662]

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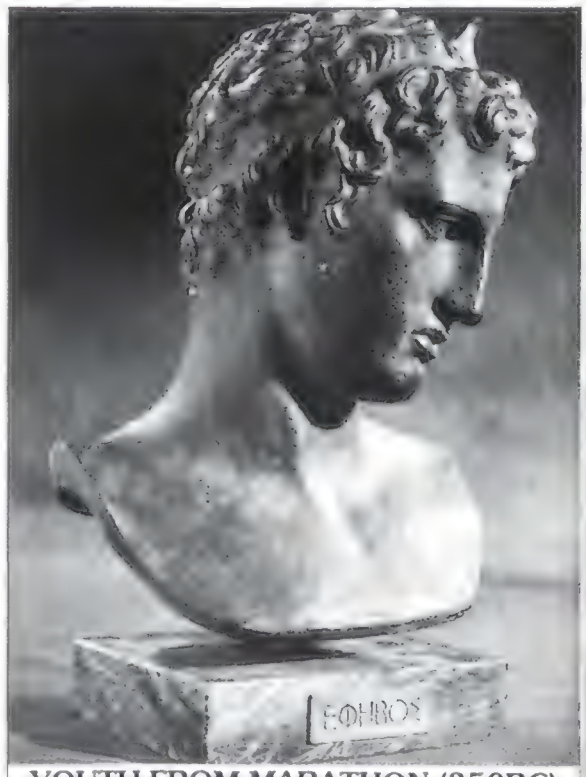

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SMITHSONIAN PERSPECTIVES

A Future in Pictures

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY IS EXPANDING THE WAY WE PRESERVE AND DEVELOP OUR PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY

RECENTLY, THE SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL MUSEUM OF American Art exhibited a traveling show from California devoted to masterworks by Ansel Adams—the noted photographer of Western landscape whose images are well known through their reproduction in books, magazines and other media (SMITHSONIAN, February 1998). The show got good reviews, as is often the case with NMAA exhibitions. The number of visitors, however, was extraordinary—well beyond the expectations of the museum—making "Ansel Adams, A Legacy" perhaps the most visited exhibition in the museum's history.

Other photographic exhibitions, including "Mathew Brady Portraits: Images as History, Photography As Art," "American Photographs: The First Century," "Visual Journal: Harlem and D.C. in the Thirties and Forties" and "Sacred Mountains of the World," have also proved popular. It is hard to judge why photography shows are such a major draw. Perhaps it relates to the portrayal of a sense of reality, to a medium many viewers use and to an interest in the subject matters treated. In museum language, photographs normally are very accessible to viewers.

The success of the Adams exhibition led me to revisit the place of photography at the Smithsonian. Many photographs in our collections, like those by Ansel Adams, are primarily intended to be works of art. A large number of others are primarily designed to record the existence of objects, places, persons and the like. Often there is an intermixture. Clearly, for instance, those photographers who "documented" the Depression of the 1930s in America for the Farm Security Administration chose and framed their subjects to tell a story of suffering and neglect, employing great technical competence and artistic creativity. A number of the documentary photographs in the Smithsonian collections are like these.

In the late 1980s, archivist Diane Vogt O'Connor and her colleagues surveyed the photography collections of ten museums and two research institutes of the Smithsonian. They found some five million photographs in the collections they examined. The units omitted contain well over two million more. And an extraordinary number have been added to these totals during the '90s.

These records and others illustrate the considerable breadth and depth of our holdings. Some are physically centralized in the cold-storage facilities of the Office of Imaging, Printing and Photographic Services. Others are maintained on museum sites. Every part of the Smithsonian seems to have a substantial collection. The Office of Horticulture, for instance, has more than 70,000 images that record floral decorations, tools, holders and landscape architecture of cemeteries, churches, parks, private gardens, homes and public buildings from the mid-19th century to the present. And the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, to go from the ground to space, has well over 600,000 images documenting the history of astronomy, and showing a variety of phenomena and celestial objects from meteors to star clusters. Many have been added since 1989 when the survey was made.

Photographs are constantly being generated by talented staff photographers for exhibits, collections management and historical documentation. For some time, nearly every object acquired by the Smithsonian has been photographed, and the images are now being digitized as well.

Photography plays an important role in the delivery of information through the Smithsonian Website. In addition to the extensive and heavily used Smithsonian materials now on-line, we are developing a digital image library and retrieval system that will enable the public to see photographs of objects and other materials together with relevant descriptions. And the indexing will be by subject matter as well as by museum or institute source. If our requests are met in next year's federal budget, those funds, together with resources from IBM, Hewlett-Packard, Intel and Polaroid, will allow us to have at least three million images on-line and accessible by the millennium.

We are trying to improve, where necessary, the adequacy of storage facilities to ensure preservation of our photography collections. Digital cataloguing also helps preserve records. For the future, I hope for the creation of a center in the Smithsonian where curators, together with visiting scholars, interns and students, can work in proximity to these collections, especially those involving American culture. Such a place could also contain space to mount many more of the photography exhibitions that prove so attractive to so many Smithsonian visitors.

I. MICHAEL HEYMAN, SECRETARY

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LETTERS TO

THE EDITOR

PRAIRIE DOGS

IN HER ARTICLE ON PRAIRIE DOGS IN the March issue, Catherine Dold described the soapy water technique employed by the Prairie Ecosystem Conservation Alliance to flush the "angels" out of their burrows. The journal entry of the Lewis and Clark expedition for September 7, 1804, in what is now Boyd County, Nebraska, reported that almost the entire Corps of Discovery spent much of that day carrying kettles, pots and pails of Missouri River water up the bank to flood some burrows. Before nightfall, the exhausted bucket brigade finally succeeded in catching one live but bedraggled prairie dog. The next spring, the expedition shipped the animal in a cage back East to President Thomas Jefferson.

James Alexander Thom
Bloomington, Indiana

IF WE ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO DIScriminate as to the value of any lifeform, then I would propose that an organization such as the National Cattlemen's Association or the Nature Conservancy purchase a building in New York City. They could dedicate it to a thriving population of city rats, ensuring their survival long after the locals have gone. We Westerners, who don't live with those varmints, could come visit. Although I've seen many "prairie rats," I've never seen a wild rat.

All animals in this country should have equal rights. Or all people should have equal protections. Or maybe we should talk about perspectives.

Olando R. Lomeland
Billings, Montana

NOW, ABOUT THAT ONE PRAIRIE DOG town in Texas that covered 25,000 square miles. Those villages sure do spread out down there. We got a place up here in New England about the same size. We call it Maine.

Ed Dudley
North Haven, Connecticut

A prairie dog from the National Zoo's popular exhibit grooms a cohabitant.

YOUR INFORMATIVE ARTICLE ONLY briefly mentioned the issue of bubonic plague. Prairie dogs are natural reservoirs for the fleas that carry *Yersinia pestis*, the plague bacillus. Handling prairie dogs and other wild animals may result in flea bites and contraction of bubonic plague. In 1995, plague was confirmed in nine Western states and in 28 species of mammals—13 of the species that tested positive were rodents. That year, seven human cases of bubonic plague were confirmed in the United States.

As more and more people move into the prairie dog's domain, the frequency of contact between domesticated animals and the rodents will increase. These household pets can then carry diseased fleas home to their human owners.

As we continue to overpopulate the planet, we will see more of this conflict. *We* are the problem, not the prairie dogs.

Andre B. Whitely, M.D.
Springdale, Arizona

ONE SUMMER BETWEEN SEMESTERS IN medical school, I researched the effect that the new Interstate 80 through Little America, Wyoming, had on the diet of prairie dogs. Historically vegetarian, these cute desert rats quickly discovered that as cars and trucks zoomed down the highway, they killed grasshoppers and other bugs. The prairie dogs built their towns right up to the edge of I-80, and venturing out onto the asphalt to feast on roadkill, they often became victims themselves. It was not long before the prairie dogs began eating their flattened comrades, changing forever their staple diet of grass and grain.

John N. Baldwin, M.D.
Twain Harte, California

I LIVE NEAR THE NATIONAL ZOOLOGical Park in Washington, D.C., and during one of my daily constitutionals, I discovered the zoo's prairie dog exhibit. Watching them kiss, dig new holes and make eye contact with tourists' cameras brings much joy to my life and erases the anxiety and frustrations of my day.

Mary G. O'Rourke
Washington, D.C.

DIVORCE

BARBARA HOLLAND'S REFERENCE TO the "British social custom that one party be innocent and want a divorce" is as relevant today as it ever was. The present law of the state of New York, *Domestic Relations Law 171*, states that there can be no divorce—even if adultery committed by the defendant is established—where the plaintiff is also guilty of adultery.

Sherman F. Sosnow
New York, New York

THE U.S. DIVORCE RATE IS NOT 50 percent. It is correct that in any given year, the number of divorce decrees granted is about half that of marriages contracted. The divorces, however, occur among a huge pool of nearly the entire adult population—not

JESSIE COHEN/NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK, SI

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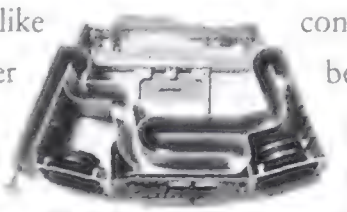

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merely the pool of those who got married in that particular year. Yes, Americans have one of the highest divorce rates in the world, but that is determined by the necessary prior condition of having one of the highest marriage rates in the world. The vast majority of Americans marry at least once, and the vast majority of those couples stay married until death do them part.

In any single year, the odds of a marriage ending in divorce are slim, as a ten-minute inspection of the figures in any almanac will readily demonstrate. Nearly all of the rest of us will remain married to the original partner, happily or not, faithfully or not, but still married.

Judith Huggins Balfe, Ph.D.
College of Staten Island, CUNY
Staten Island, New York

YOU MADE A MINOR MATHEMATICAL error in your article on divorce in saying that a person has 128 great-great-great-great-great-grandfathers. The figure would actually be 64. The number 128 requires six "greats" in front of "grandfather."

C. Ralph Verno
West Chester, Pennsylvania

ANYEMAQEN

THE PICTURE ON PAGES 132-133 OF Roy Rowan's article about pilot Bill Odom and the aborted quest to measure China's Anyemaqen gave me something of a jolt. I was working on the weekly *Berea News* (now the *News-Sun*) and took a very similar picture of Odom's plane crash at the 1949 National Air Races in Berea, just south of what is now called Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

Odom was in the Thompson Trophy Race, which covered a triangular course that was marked with one pylon at the airport and two others in built-up areas to the south. Odom's plane crashed into a house and went through a concrete floor of the adjoining garage, digging a hole more than six feet deep. After that, air races were banned over residential areas.

Albert C. Andrews
Berea, Ohio

IN EARLY MARCH 1949, BILL ODOM set a world record for light plane flight. Piloting a slightly modified single-engine Beechcraft Bonanza (wingtip fuel tanks had been added for extra range), Capt. William P. Odom flew solo for 4,957.24 miles from Honolulu to Teterboro, New Jersey, in 36 hours, two minutes. His untimely death in an air race scant months after his world record brought great sadness to those who knew him.

John H. Murdoch
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

DINOSAUR GOLD

DAVID ROBERTS' INFORMATIVE ARTICLE about the battle for title to dinosaur bones must give pause to every collector, both amateur and professional, who seeks these invaluable treasures.

As a first-time bone hunter on a collecting trip in the badlands of Wyoming, I found a horned toad, a rabbit skull, a dismembered antelope and a few chips of a dinosaur bone. Thank God I didn't unearth *T. rex*: I couldn't afford the litigation.

William John Demoraski
Glendale, Arizona

RICHARD DIEBENKORN

ON PAGE 75 OF KENNETH BAKER'S article, you show a 1943 pencil drawing by ex-marine Richard Diebenkorn that he oddly titled *Marine Jacket*. All marines know that the proper name for that garment is "blouse."

Lewis H. Davis, Jr.
Houston, Texas

THE OBJECT AT HAND

DAVID A. TAYLOR'S COLUMN ABOUT the doughnut machine is relevant to my life. I had the pleasure of working for D.C.A. Food Industries [formerly Doughnut Corporation of America] for 30 years. As a passing thought on the still picture from *It Happened One Night*, the cake doughnuts with which Clark Gable teaches Claudette Colbert to dunk are rejects. No self-respecting doughnut fryer would put them on the shelf.

Lewis H. Schaefer
Chesterfield, Missouri

AS YOUR COLUMN STATED, ADOLPH Levitt—my great-uncle "A"—immigrated to the United States from czarist Russia. In New York City, he invented the first doughnut machine. He had boundless energy and enthusiasm, and he built his doughnut empire around a rhyming bit of philosophy. Uncle "A" had an illustration that showed two jesters leaning against an ornate placard. The jester on the left unhappily contemplates a doughnut that is but a thin ring and almost entirely "hole." On the right, a blissfully smiling jester admires his plump doughnut that has a nearly imperceptible hole. Written on the placard is *The Optimist's Creed*: "As you ramble on through life, / Brother, whatever be your goal, / Keep your eye upon the doughnut / And not upon the hole."

Alan C. Dimen
Berkeley, California

WRITE TO SMITHSONIAN

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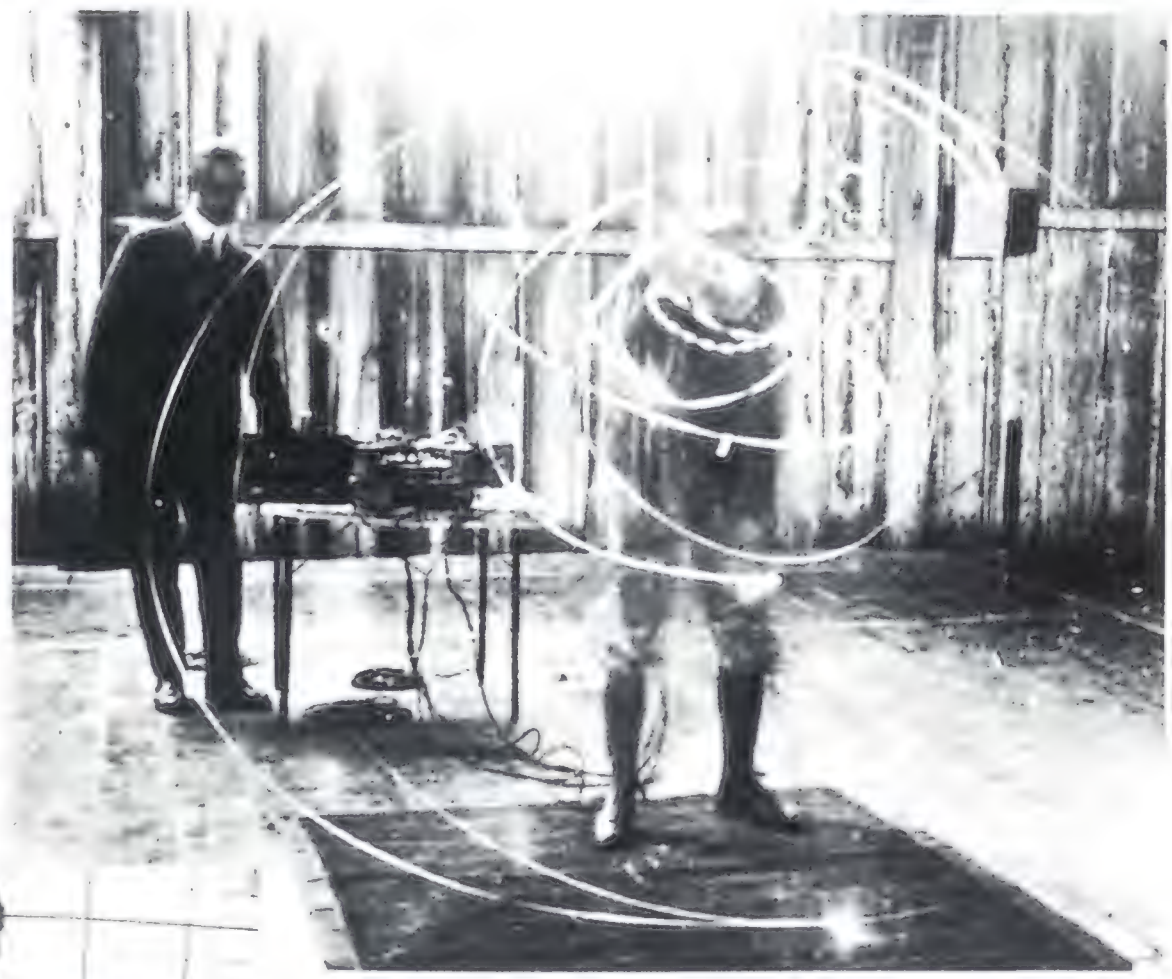
Catching a Glimpse of America's Industrial Past

BY MICHAEL KERNAN



In the early 1900s, Frank and Lillian Gilbreth used time-motion studies to analyze a golfer's swing (top) and a worker assembling parts.

YOU KNOW HOW A TRULY ADdicted golfer will be mysteriously driven to practice his swing in strange places like station platforms and wedding receptions. He will whip an imaginary club at an imaginary ball, carefully keeping his spine and pelvis in alignment, then will rotate his whole body in a graceful follow-through. It's a little spooky.

The other day I was browsing through the terrific Engineering and Industry Collections at the National Museum of American History when I stumbled upon some of the time-motion studies of Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, the pioneer efficiency experts.

The museum has made large photographic prints of the 2,250 glass plate images the couple created between 1910 and 1924. There are men moving car chassis in production lines; women assembling items from a pile of parts on a table; one-armed men operating typewriters; a man on crutches making umbrellas; men laying brick, mixing cement; a shoe clerk assisting a female customer; a dentist with a patient surrounded by the sort of grim vintage dental apparatus I haven't seen since I was a kid.

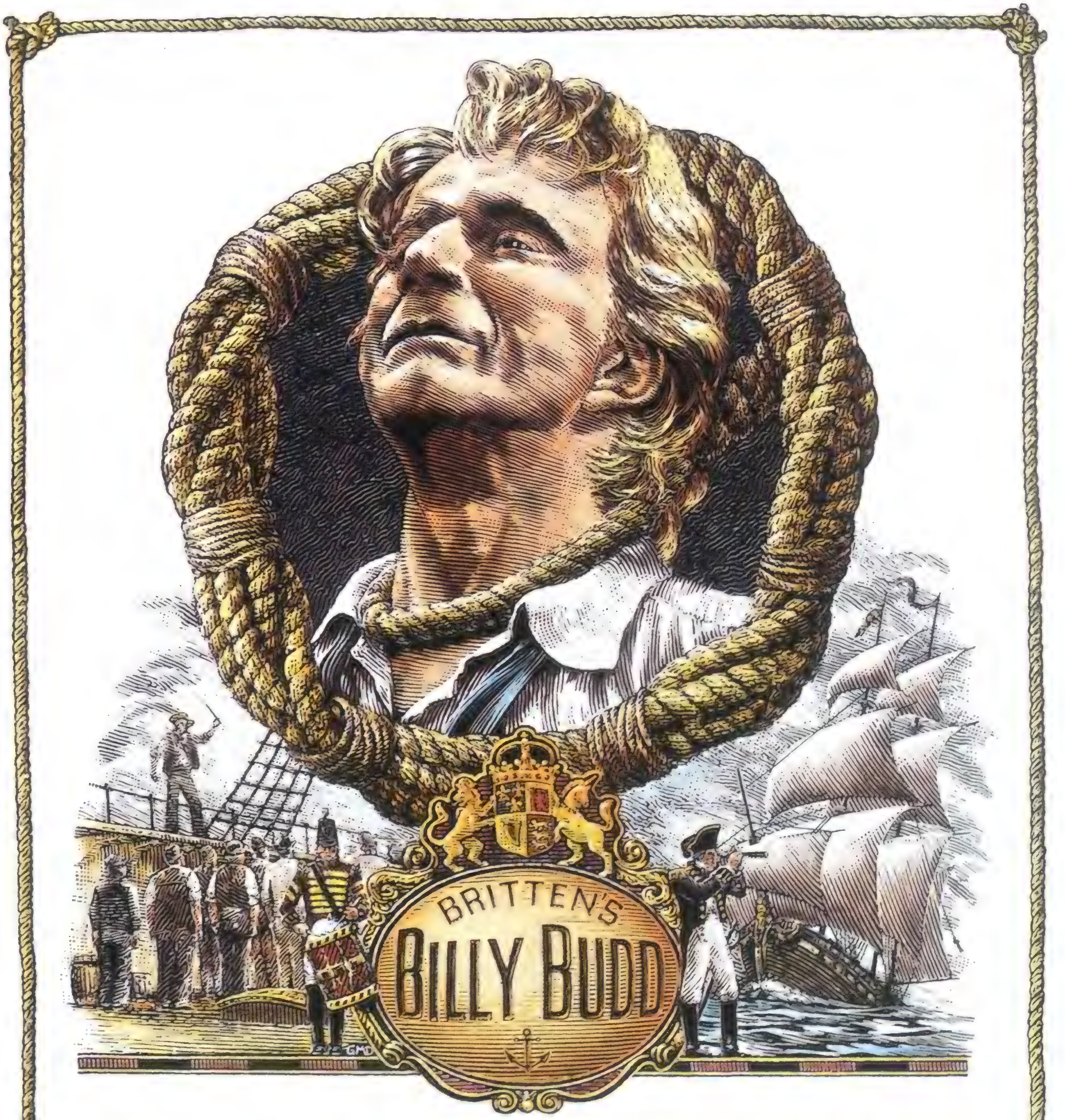
Many of the photographs have timer clocks in the background. In some, lights are attached to the people's hands so that their movements describe a pattern in a time exposure. Out of this work came the Gilbreths' great contribution to the Industrial Age: the reduction of wasted motion and fatigue in the factory and office.

And then I found a picture of a golfer who was a subject in one of their studies. He stands in a darkened room, hardly more than a blob himself, but with lights on his head, hands and arms. His golf swing appears as a tangled, incredibly complicated white line in the gloom, a spaghetti dinner of light.

Clearly, Gilbreth was a golf obsessive who just couldn't resist trying out his time-motion techniques in search of the perfect swing. I knew that he and his brilliant wife, Lillian, who later applied efficiency techniques to work in the home, and their many children had been immortalized in the book and film *Cheaper by the Dozen*. I should have figured he would be a golf nut.

"Actually, today's carpal tunnel research and the field of ergonomics have grown out of their pioneering work in time-motion studies," says Peter Liebhold, a museum specialist who is compiling a history about work. "They felt that all work was made up of a combination of basic

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY



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A WORLD OF ENERGY.

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In 1882, a bridge in Bismarck, North Dakota, passed a load-capacity test when it held steady under the weight of a dozen locomotives.

motions," he explains. "Using these building blocks of movements, they sought to break jobs down to such an elemental state that they could compare the motions of a golfer with the motions of a drill press operator."

I doubt if anyone ever did any scientific studies of pressers at the factory where I worked back in the 1940s. I had a summer job at the Clarence Williams bicycle-wheel factory in Utica, New York. We put in 40 hours for about $25 a week less withholding. Our pay came in a little brown envelope, in cash. The entire factory operated off a single shaft that ran the length of the rickety, old wooden building. Punch presses, roller presses, paint sprayers, all the machines, were attached to the overhead shaft by leather loops, and when we started up in the morning and after lunch, the shaft had to be put into gear gradually, in little hits, until it got up to speed.

The guy at the next roller to mine—we pressed two-inch-wide steel hoops into bicycle-wheel frames in several stages—was named Yost, a big, red-faced man in suspenders and a high-button undershirt. Every day he would finish his sandwich, tap the crumbs out of his lunch bag and put it over his head—and lean back in his chair and take a nap. That was a good summer.

But they are gone now. Clarence Williams, Yost, the factory, and even the hillside where it perched. It's part of a freeway.

Bill Worthington, a museum specialist in the engineering archives, is surrounded by thousands of files and photographs of work from bygone eras. "We get collections from engineering firms and individual engineers," he said as he led me through a warren of file cabinets and drawers. "We send out the word through engineering societies. After James Forgie, the tunnel engineer for the Pennsylvania Railroad, died, his stuff was left out on the curb with the trash. His life's work. But some passing engineer spotted it and saved it. It's all his drawings and photographs of work on the tunnels into Manhattan around 1910. The best part is his comments written in the margins. Those alone make it really valuable to us."

A Hurley track-laying machine was used to create a line on the Erie Railroad in 1908; workers helped position sleepers and rails.

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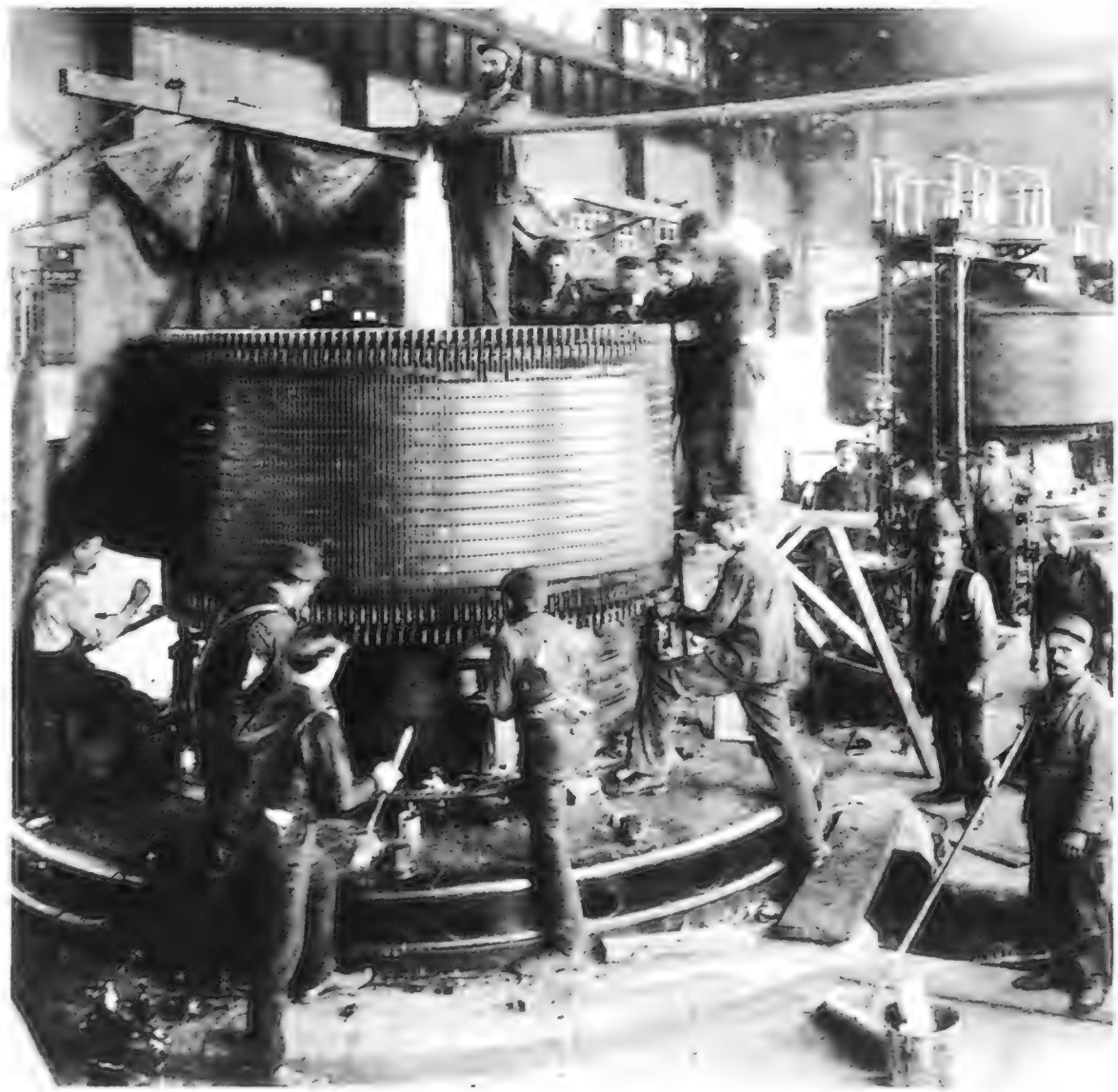
We looked into the 94 cases that contain the works of Ralph Modjeski and Frank Masters, prominent early 20th-century engineers in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, whose firm still exists. We saw the files of John Roebling's Sons, the company that made the wire for countless suspension bridges (John Roebling had himself designed the Brooklyn Bridge), and photographs of the old-time steam engines built by Bruno Nordberg of Milwaukee, and the railroad bridges of George Morison. It was Morison who persuaded Theodore Roosevelt to choose Panama for the route of the isthmian canal. At the time, other routes, notably one through Nicaragua, were favored by some.

"We have a diary by an engineer who surveyed that route and drew his own map of it," Worthington added.

Poring over old photographs, tracings and blueprints of bridges from Richmond to Boston, I asked how many of the bridges were still around.

"Oh, they're nearly all gone. They were simply too light. The size of locomotives and rolling stock increased so much in the 1890s that a lot of important bridges were just torn down, even though some of them were quite new. Most were wrought iron, though some were steel. Today they're reinforced concrete and steel."



At the electrical generating station of the Niagara Falls Power Company in 1900, mechanics make final adjustments to the armature of a generator.

One charming picture shows a dozen locomotives lined up on the Northern Pacific Railroad bridge in Bismarck, North Dakota. It was a test of load capacity, a rather expensive one it seemed to me, had it failed.

There are tens of thousands of pictures here. The construction of Penn Station in New York and the tunnel that led to it. An insurance map of the Uxbridge cotton mill in Massachusetts, in color. The entire archive of Lockwood Greene Company, 1880 to 1960. The complete drawings of the Burlington Bridge of 1868, which spanned the Mississippi River in Iowa. It's a remarkable document, with the dimensions and every detail, including charts showing the stress on each member, all calculated out, all done by hand.

"And there are photographs of the pile drivers and other equipment used to build it," says Worthington. "This was three years after the Civil War ended. Oh, it's long gone."

One album containing images of every construction along the Baltimore and Ohio line between Baltimore and Philadelphia, circa 1891, was preserved only because an engineer used the backs of the pages for personal pictures. His family pictures have been removed, but the names written under these lost snapshots are still there.

One shot of a stone bridge shows the photographer's handcar waiting on the tracks, the kind two people operated by pumping up and down. Those are gone, too. They used to be a great feature of the comics.

In a cabinet, I saw someone's collection of toy steam engines and miniature waterwheels. In another room, an assistant was smoothing out rolled-up drawings that had come in recently. They were being stored in giant folders and catalogued.

"We spend a huge amount of time organizing this stuff," Worthington said. "We cross-reference everything that we can, to make it easier to find."

Once an engineering firm wanted to see some early design work on the Erie Railroad yards in New Jersey. No one knew where the original pilings were. They could be seen in a venerable set of drawings provided by the collection.

I don't know, maybe some folks will find all this boring. But to me, it's kind of haunting, this glimpse of the real physical appearance of an America that vanished with the passing of the Industrial Age.

When I see these photographs of forgotten bridges and tunnels, when I see the grimy-faced breaker boys sorting coal, and that dentist with his patient, and the lighted golfer, I feel I am looking right into the past. And I realize the past is still here with us, just beneath the surface.

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THE OBJECT

AT HAND

Wow! A Mile a Minute!

BUT 60 MPH WAS A BREEZE TO BARNEY OLDFIELD, BETTER KNOWN AS THE "SPEED KING" OF THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE WORLD

BY MICHAEL KERNAN

The Winton Bullet No. 2, one of Barney Oldfield's favorites, had eight huge cylinders. In 1904, at Ormond Beach, he drove it 84 mph, setting a record.

"YOU HAVE EVERY SENSATION OF BEING hurled through space. The machine is throbbing under you with its cylinders beating a drummer's tattoo, and the air tears past you in a gale. In its maddening dash through the swirling dust the machine takes on the attributes of a sentient thing . . . I tell you, gentlemen: no man can drive faster and live!"

It is June 20, 1903. Barney Oldfield, billed as "America's Premier Driver," has just become the first man in America to drive a gas-powered automobile around a dirt track at—think of it—a mile a minute! Now his agent is telling a group of rube reporters about the thrilling rigors of unimaginable speed. "The chest of a driver is forced in," he says. "Average lungs can't overcome the outward force and the result is like strangulation. Blood rushes to the head, temporary but complete paralysis of mind over body occurs." The thrill of such speeds, and such hype, was not confined to flacks.

A month later Oldfield drove even faster at the Empire City Track in Yonkers, New York, and *The Automobile* magazine described him taking a curve: "The rear wheels slid sideways for a distance of 50 feet, throwing up a huge cloud of dirt. Men were white-faced and breathless, while women covered their eyes and sank back, overcome by the recklessness of it all."

They named cars in those days; that day Oldfield was driving old 999—after the record-breaking locomotive on the New York Central line. The car had been designed and built by Henry Ford, an obscure Detroit automaker. Ford had driven 999 himself in a few races, but in 1902 he turned it over to this 24-year-old bike racer from Ohio. It was Barney Oldfield who made Ford a household word. "Race on Sunday, sell on Monday" was the watchword. Of course 999 was nothing like the regular cars Ford made, but they were pretty good, too.

It would be nice to report that the Smithsonian owns 999, but it belongs to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, where it has resided since 1919. But Oldfield, who dominated car racing for ten years, set records in the object at hand, namely a Winton Bullet, one of two owned by the Smithsonian and now on long-term loan to the Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum in Cleveland.

Just after the turn of the century the whole world was car-crazy. In the United States, there were scores of automakers, and most of them built for the rich. Ford made history—and a fortune—by building for the masses. In 1908 he came out with the great Model T, a simple machine ("the customer can have any color he wants so long as it's black," he said) that could be fixed with a hacksaw, a hammer and a pair of pliers, and cost $825. His idea was to produce cars that his workers could afford to buy, a radical concept that, some historians say, helped ensure that America would never have a worker-led revolution.

The more you read about the early cars, the more you realize that some of the wind-whistling hype was true—at least driving them was often a very dangerous adventure. Before one early race, 999's engine began to sputter for lack of fuel. Quick as a wink Oldfield cut a hole in the gas tank, stuck in a hose and kept blowing air in as his partner, seizing the tiller, drove all the way around the track. Thereafter, he liked to call himself a human gas pump.

Soon every small boy in the country was copying Oldfield's swagger and round goggles. "We love his grimy, goggled face / His matchless daring in a race," a bit of popular doggerel declared. He used to come to towns for races in his private railroad car. His agent would announce that he would take on all comers at the local horse track, a dirt oval found in almost every village. Suspense built, and finally the great man emerged, cigar clamped in his mouth

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to cushion the place where he'd broken some molars in a crash. He usually grinned at the crowd, shouted "You know me, Barney Oldfield!" and took off around the track, steering with a tiller, fighting the bumps. Oil from the open crankshaft jetting up in his face, a hurricane of dirt thrown up on his skidding turns. He always won—he had the fastest car, after all, and each time his promoters would claim he'd set a new speed record. The crowd, feeling a part of history, went wild.

This was a time before garages: cars were still kept in carriage houses and stables. Only a fraction of the nation's roads were paved. By 1902, only 909 cars had been registered in all of New York. The first official gasoline-powered auto race in the country had been held in Chicago in 1895, when Frank Duryea's one-cylinder car beat all contenders after a grueling ten-hour, 52-mile trek—average speed 5.1 mph (SMITHSONIAN, September 1994). The first official auto show was held in 1900 at Madison Square Garden, with 31 cars displayed, many of them still steam-powered.

The first Winton Bullet, built in 1902, had four cylinders and a leather clutch-facing that wore out quickly. Pistons were cast iron. Tires blew out with frightening frequency. The second Bullet had eight cylinders: two in-line four-cylinder engines that were bolted together. In 1904 Oldfield drove it 84 mph at Ormond Beach, Florida. These machines were monsters. Bullet No. 1 had cylinders as large in diameter as a coffee can. The 999 had a wooden clutch and a 230-pound flywheel that was two feet across and six inches thick.

August 1903 headline: "A Carnival of Speed at Yonkers' Track." Oldfield drove 64.52 mph. By the end of 1904, Barney Oldfield held most of the dirt track records from one to 50 miles. In a time when a skilled worker made $2 a day, Oldfield once won $650 in a single race; he eventually commanded thousands of dollars just to show up. He set records in a Peerless Green Dragon, a Stutz, a Blitzen Benz,

Above, in 1912, Oldfield races a new Curtiss flying machine. Below, before a race he shows off his trademark cigar-stub grin.

and the Miller Golden Sub—the first enclosed racing car, gilded and shaped like an egg. In 1910 he nudged the Blitzen Benz to 131.25 mph, "fastest ever traveled by a human being," to become "Speed King of the World."

He raced against airplanes. He raced against trains, including once in a Mack Sennett movie where he arrived just in time to save Mabel Normand.

With his agent, the ingenious Will Pickens, Oldfield soon was making money hand over fist. He often sported thousands of dollars' worth of jewelry, including a four-carat diamond pinky ring, and he handed out $5 tips when a dime would do. Once in San Francisco, greeted at the station by a brass band, he invited all 65 musicians to dinner at the Palace Hotel and paid a tab of $845, two years' income for many Americans at the time. He spent thousands in bars, where he gained a scandalous reputation as a brawler. What money he didn't drink up or bet on horses seemed to go for fines posed by the American Automobile Association, which, from 1902, was the self-proclaimed arbiter of all speed records and which insisted on a certain decorum around the tracks.

Officials at the AAA didn't like it either when Oldfield turned actor in 1906 and went onstage on Broadway, revving the Green Dragon on a treadmill. It started a fad: the next year 11 characters in various Broadway plays entered driving a car.

Oldfield finally retired from racing at 40, and with Harvey Firestone's help opened the Oldfield Tire and Rubber Company in Akron. The hangovers were lasting longer, and he kept losing the bar fights, but there was still a race or two in him. In 1927 he averaged 76.4 mph in a 1,000-mile nonstop stock car event at Culver City in California. In 1931 he retreated to a celebrity's retirement in Beverly Hills and watched for years while others broke his records. He died in bed in 1946, at age 68.

There is a story that in old age he was stopped for speeding after a wild chase featuring three motorcycle cops. He watched calmly as the toughest of them strode up.

"Who do you think you are?" the cop snarled at him. "Barney Oldfield?"

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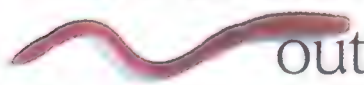

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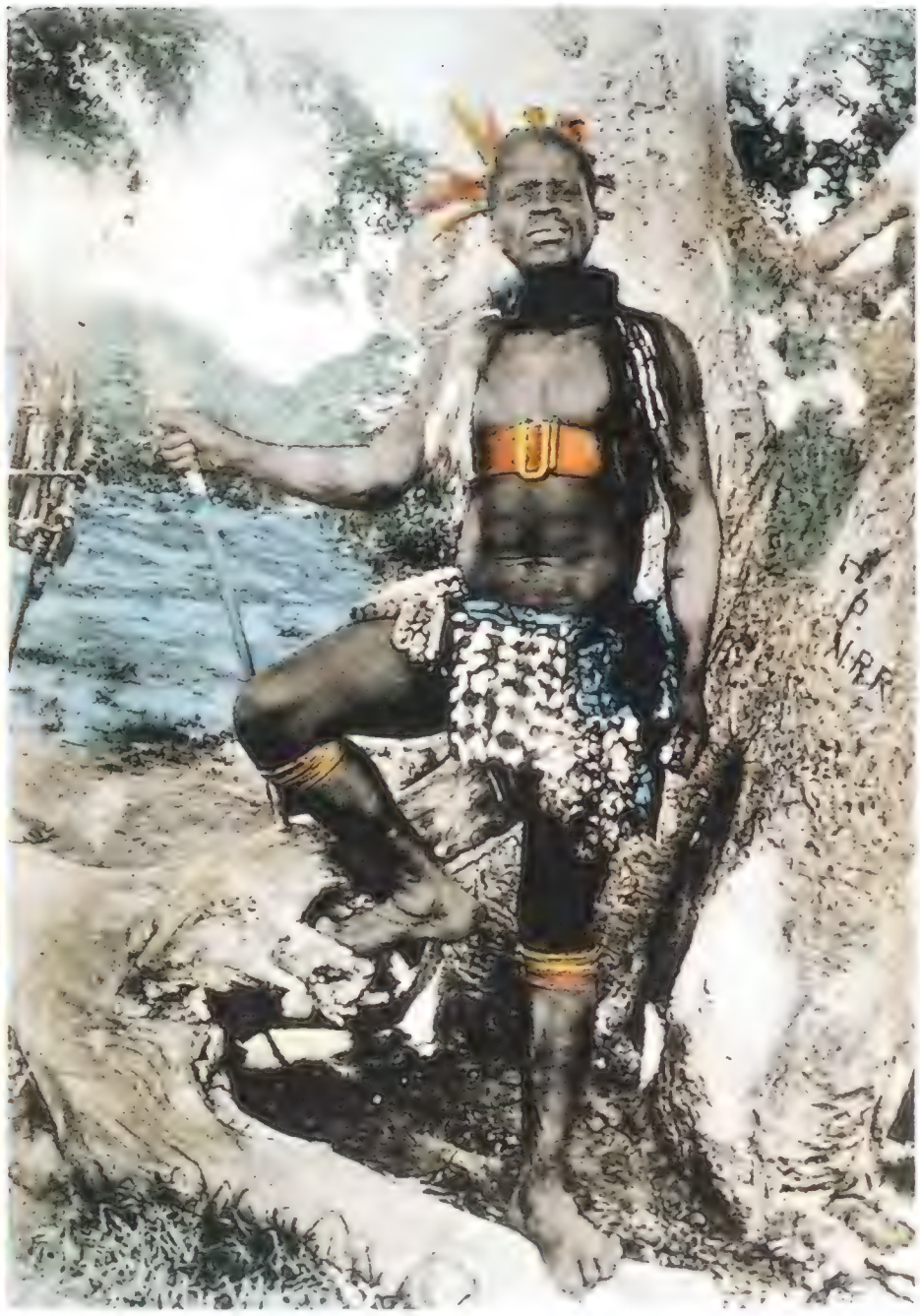

Turn-of-the-Century Views

SMITHSONIAN HIGHLIGHTS

THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY was the golden era of postcard production. It was also an era of rapidly expanding European and American influence. Starting in 1895, when the development of the printing trades allowed for the economical manufacture of mass-produced "view-cards," images of distant cultures and "exotic" lands were posted around the globe. The views that came out of Africa, the Americas, Oceania and Asia during this period provided detailed documentation of far-off places and peoples, but they also painted a romanticized and often misleading picture.

A new book, just out from Smithsonian Institution Press, draws on anthropological and historical sources to examine the postcard's parallel roles as souvenir, collectible and popular art form. *Delivering Views: Distant Cultures in Early Postcards*, edited by Christraud M. Geary and Virginia-Lee Webb, addresses the differences between original photographs and their postcard equivalents and discusses common practices—such as artificial settings, colorization, and costumes and props—that helped perpetuate certain stereotypes. The c. 1900 photograph (above, right) of a South African "Zulu Warrior," for instance, was staged to produce an exaggerated view of the subject. In contrast, the formal studio portrait of the Senegalese trader (above, left) taken by postcard photographer François-Edmond Fortier, c. 1905, presents a more authentic and dignified image. "As popular and ever-present artifacts," says Geary, "postcards have helped create standard views of the world and have been integrated into communication, commemoration and history." —*Diane M. Bolz*

FRANK KHOURY/NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART, ELIOT ELISOFAN PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES

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SMITHSONIAN HIGHLIGHTS

Art Night on the Mall

Enjoy special extended summer hours at the National Museum of African Art, the Freer Gallery of Art, the Sackler Gallery and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Thursday evenings until 8 P.M., from May 28 through September 3. The Ripley Center's International Gallery and the Hirshhorn's Full Circle Café will also remain open.

Special May Exhibitions, Events

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

Stuart Davis (May 22-September 7) Exhibition features works that reflect the artist's interest in French modernism and American popular culture.
Time Out! Sports in Art (through May 31) Display celebrates sports as envisioned by a variety of artists.
Posters American Style (through August 9) Exhibition presents poster graphics that reflect the concerns, issues, events and cultural aspects of American life circa 1895 to 1995.

RENWICK GALLERY

Inspiring Reform: Boston's Arts and Crafts Movement (through July 5) Show examines Boston's contribution to the Arts and Crafts movement—books, ceramics, furniture, jewelry, textiles.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Faces of Time: 75 Years of Portraits for Time Magazine (through August 2) Display features the original art for cover portraits commissioned by *Time* magazine, including a lithograph of Bobby Kennedy by Roy Lichtenstein.
Celebrity Caricature in America (through August 23) Show looks at the craze for portrait caricature that swept America between the world wars. See page 68.

HIRSHHORN MUSEUM & SCULPTURE GARDEN

George Segal, A Retrospective: Sculptures, Paintings, Drawings (through May 17) Exhibition showcasing the work of

Planning a Smithsonian Visit?

Receive a free Associates' planning packet. Write Smithsonian Information, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560, or call 202-357-2700 (voice) or 202-357-1729 (TTY), 9 A.M. - 5 P.M., Monday-Friday; 10 A.M. - 4 P.M., Saturday-Sunday. *Note:* Parking near the Smithsonian is limited. The Metrorail subway is convenient to all museums (details in packet).

Begin your visit at the Smithsonian Information Center's Associates' Reception Desk—open 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. daily—in the Castle. Special materials await you there. The Court dining room and all other eating facilities in the National Museum of Natural History are closed. Associates may receive a discount at the National Air and Space Museum's Wright Place restaurant, open 11:30 A.M. - 3 P.M. daily.

Smithsonian museums are generally open 10 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. daily, except December 25. Hours at the National Zoo are 10 A.M. - 6 P.M. daily (buildings), 6 A.M. - 8 P.M. (grounds), as of May 1.

SMITHSONIAN WEBSITE

The Smithsonian home page on the World Wide Web (www. si.edu) offers on-line information about exhibitions, collections, events and products.

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the New York-based sculptor includes key examples of his white-plaster figurative tableaux.

Directions—Kiki Smith: Night (through June 21) New works by the American artist explore the enduring yet fragile systems of the natural world.

NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM

The Enola Gay (through May 18) Display features the forward fuselage of the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

Star Wars: The Magic of Myth (through November 1) Exhibition commemorating the 20th anniversary of the *Star Wars* trilogy features original props, models, costumes and artworks. Free timed same-day tickets are available at the museum's ticket desk, on a first-come basis. Advance tickets are available from ProTix for a service charge of $2.25 per ticket (1-800-529-2440); general information (202-786-2122).

Mission to Mir (11:30 A.M., 1:40 and 3:50 P.M. daily) IMAX film takes viewers aboard the first permanent space station—Russia's *Mir*.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Ella Fitzgerald: First Lady of Song (runs indefinitely) Exhibition features a sampling of personal artifacts documenting the singer's extraordinary 60-year career.

Duke Ellington Renaissance Man (through May 31) Annual art exhibit features the work of Washington, D.C. students.

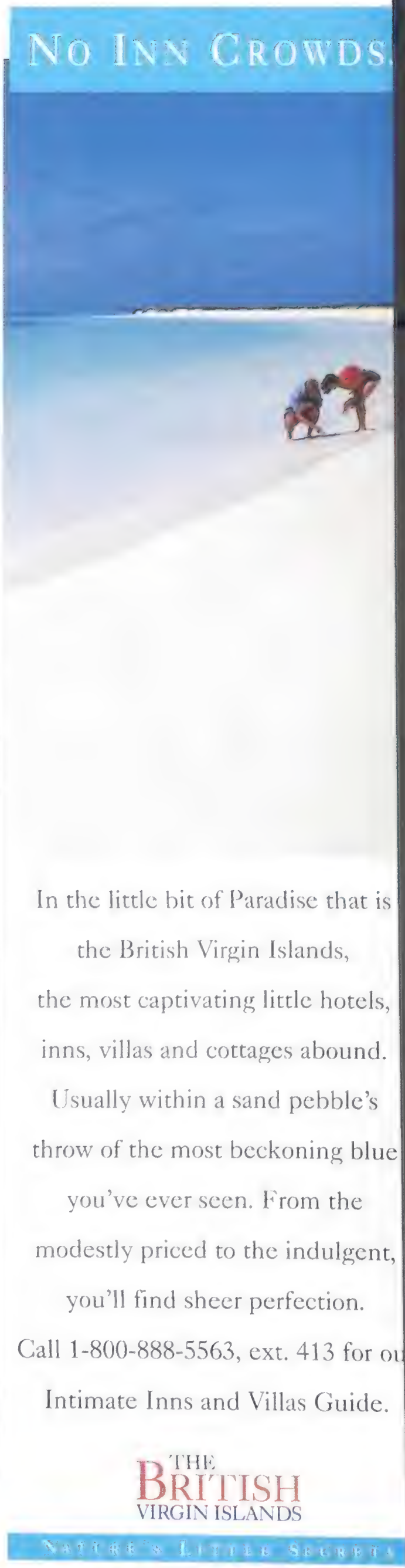
Science in American Life Permanent exhibition tracks advances and discoveries in science over the past 125 years.

Information Age: People, Information and Technology Permanent installation traces the 150-year history of information technology.

NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

[NEAR UNION STATION ON CAPITOL HILL]

Colombian Stamps (through June 5) Exhibition features 500 stamps that represent every state in Colombia and reflect the country's history from 1859 to 1907.



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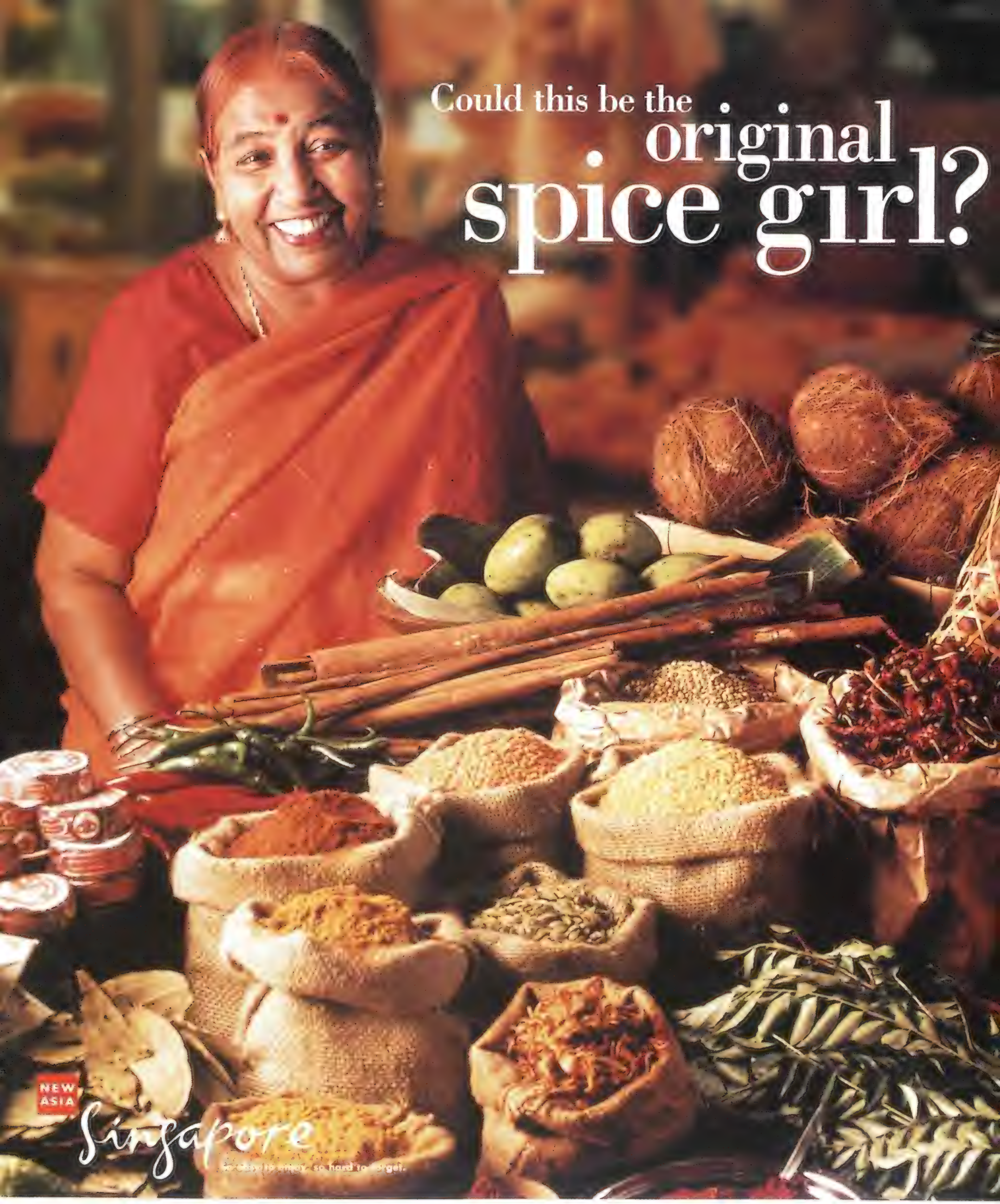
NATURE'S LITTLE SECRETS



With its gleaming skyscrapers and sophisticated shopping malls, modern Singapore is truly the face of New Asia. Yet the old Asia is never far away: sensitively preserved Colonial, Chinese, Malay and Indian quarters offer exciting glimpses of the past. And when you need a break from exploring, remember that Singapore's rich culinary heritage makes it one of the world's most exciting places to eat. Whether you're sampling satay in one of our renowned food stalls or devouring a spicy curry in Little India, a vacation in Singapore is one that you'll savor forever.

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Papier-mâché and cloth sculpture of the Beatles, on view in NPG's "Faces of *Time*" show, was created by Gerald Scarfe for *Time* magazine's September 22, 1967, cover.

Our Town: Mural Art of the New Deal (through September 8) Show features 18 mural studies commissioned for U.S. post offices during the 1930s.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Janet Annenberg Hooker Hall of Geology, Gems and Minerals New permanent gallery showcases the National Gem Collection and takes visitors from the depths of a copper mine to the far reaches of the Solar System.

Natural Selections: Museum Photography by Chip Clark (through August 28) Images of the museum's scientific work, collections and field research taken by staff photographer Chip Clark.

Contemporary Korean Ceramics Permanent exhibition features 33 contemporary works inspired by centuries-old ceramic traditions.

NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK

The Birds of Paradise Lost New permanent display takes a look at the work of Smithsonian ornithologists on the ori[illegible]leontology and conservatio[illegible] distinctive birdlife of the Hawaiian Islands.

Pollinarium Permanent installation examines the means of plant reproduction.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART

Olowe of Ise: A Yoruba Sculptor to Kings (through September 7) African art masterpieces by the early 20th-century Yoruba carver include the museum's high-relief "Palace Door," pillars, containers and shrine figures.

Ceramic Arts at the National Museum of African Art (runs indefinitely) Display features 14 vessels by master potters representing various regions of the African continent.

FREER GALLERY OF ART

Arts of the Islamic World (opens May 3) Objects drawn from the Freer's internationally renowned collections date from the 9th to the 19th century and include Koran pages, metalwork, ceramics, manuscript paintings and calligraphy.

In the Mountains (through August 2) Exhibition explores the depiction of mountains in Chinese art.

Art for Art's Sake (runs indefinitely) Display takes a look at the collection

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NEW ASIA

Singapore

of American art assembled by the gallery's founder, Charles Lang Freer.

ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY

Ikat: Splendid Silks from Central Asia (through September 7) Exhibition showcases 19th-century ikat textiles, noted for their vibrant colors and bold designs.
Poetic Landscapes: Two 17th-Century Chinese Albums (through July 5) Display features the Ming dynasty "Eight Views of Xiao-Xiang" and Qing dynasty "Landscapes Inspired by Tang Poems."
Sakhi: Friend and Messenger in Rajput Love Paintings (through July 7) Paintings created in northern India between the 17th and 19th centuries highlight the role of the "sakhi" as confidante and messenger in Rajput love paintings.

ARTS AND INDUSTRIES BUILDING

Speak to My Heart: African American Communities of Faith and Contemporary Society (opens May 21) Exhibition presented by the Anacostia Museum and Center for African American History and Culture focuses on the role of the black church in contemporary life.
Resonant Forms: Contemporary Women Sculptors (through September 30) Works by such artists as Valerie Maynard and René Stout explore black women's representation and experience.
Three Generations of African American Women Sculptors (through September 30) Featured artists include Mary Edmonia Lewis and Meta Vaux Warrick Fuller.
Discovery Theater Live theater for young audiences. For information, call 202-357-1500 (voice or TTY) weekdays, 9 A.M. - 4 P.M.

THE CASTLE—INFORMATION CENTER

Smithson's Gift Permanent display tells the story of the British scientist whose bequest founded the Smithsonian.

INTERNATIONAL GALLERY, S. DILLON RIPLEY CENTER

The Jewels of Lalique (May 15-August 16) Art Nouveau jewelry and objets d'art by the renowned artist-jeweler René Lalique (1860-1945).

ANACOSTIA MUSEUM

Man Made: African American Men and Quilting Traditions (through June 28) Exhibition presents 50 traditional and contemporary quilts made by African-American men.

HEYE CENTER, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN

[NEW YORK CITY]

Indian Humor (May 31-August 2) Works by 38 artists in a variety of media display the depth and vitality of Native American humor.

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COOPER-HEWITT, NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM

[NEW YORK CITY]

Arquitectonica: The Times Square Project (through May 10) Exhibition focuses on the Miami-based architectural firm's vision for a new multiuse complex in Times Square.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUES

Catalogues available currently include:
The Jewels of Lalique ($50/$37.50 paper)
Stuart Davis ($35 paper)
Posters American Style ($35 cloth)
Celebrity Caricature in America ($45 cloth)
Faces of Time ($40 cloth)
Three Generations of African American Women Sculptors ($24.95 paper)
The National Gem Collection ($39.95/$24.95 paper)
To order, send a check or money order to Smithsonian Museum Shops, P.O. Box 1140, Newington, Virginia 22122. Include 15 percent of the purchase price for postage and handling (minimum, $4.50).

THE SMITHSONIAN ASSOCIATES RESIDENT PROGRAM

To become a member, or for fee and ticket information, call 202-357-3030. May events include:
The Last Apocalypse: Europe at the Year 1000 A.D. (May 11; 6 P.M.) Distinguished author James Reston, Jr., talks about the turbulent years leading up to the first millennium.
Buffalo Soldiers: Reality and Myth (May 16; 9:30 A.M. - 1 P.M.) Seminar features the noted historian Frank N. Schubert.
Alexander Calder: Sculpture in Motion (May 30; 10 A.M. - 5 P.M.) All-day seminar with a special viewing of the National Gallery of Art's exhibition "Alexander Calder: 1898-1976."

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION TRAVELING EXHIBITION SERVICE

SITES organizes and circulates exhibitions to cities throughout the United States and abroad. To sponsor a show in your community, write to: SITES, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560. Here are some May exhibitions:
- Athens, Georgia (May 1-June 28) *The Tongass: Alaska's Magnificent Rain Forest*, State Botanical Garden of Georgia.
- Chicago, Illinois (May 22-September 7) *Ocean Planet*, Museum of Science and Industry.

SMITHSONIAN PRODUCTIONS

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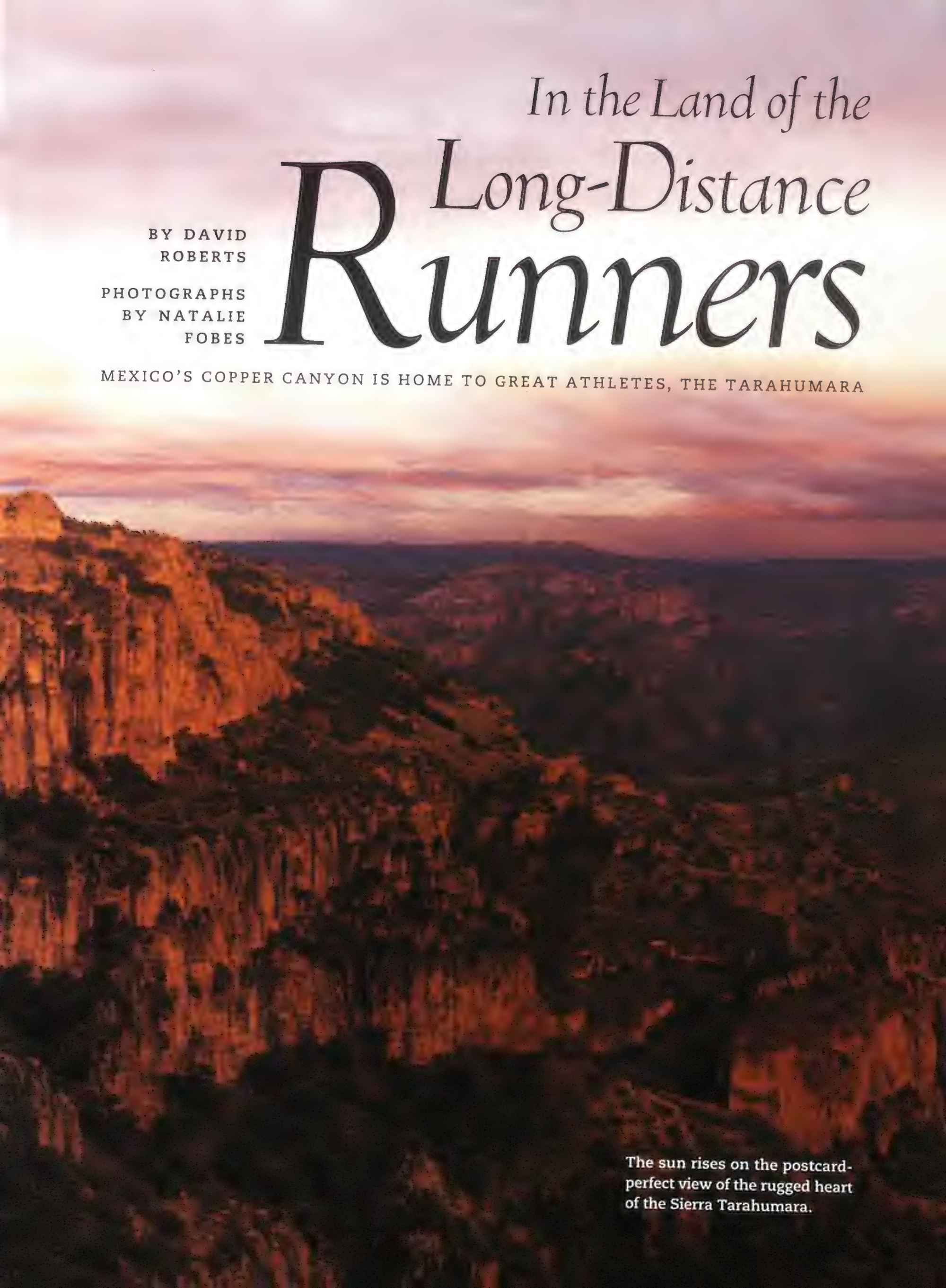
In the Land of the Long-Distance Runners

BY DAVID ROBERTS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATALIE FOBES

MEXICO'S COPPER CANYON IS HOME TO GREAT ATHLETES, THE TARAHUMARA



The sun rises on the postcard-perfect view of the rugged heart of the Sierra Tarahumara.

THAT SUNDAY LAST OCTOBER, WE HAD COME TO THE VILLAGE OF SAMACHIQUE, HIGH IN Mexico's Copper Canyon region, to attend mass in the rustic Catholic church. We loitered on the porch outside a locked door, but nobody showed up. At last a passerby explained: everybody in town had headed down-valley for a footrace.

An hour later, after a winding drive and a short hike, photographer Natalie Fobes, guide Carlos Peréz and I sat on a stone wall in a woodland defile, awaiting the start of the race. The only outsiders present, we were surrounded by Tarahumara dressed in their Sunday best, chatting and joking, the women cooking up small feasts, as the throng anticipated one of the major social events of Tarahumara life.

Among the deepest chasms in North America, deeper than the Grand Canyon, the Barranca del Cobre unfolds in southwestern Chihuahua as a multi-forked river system cutting its tortuous way through the heart of the Sierra Madre. To intruders such as ourselves, Copper Canyon seems a spectacular and daunting wilderness, threaded here and there by perilous dirt roads. But for the Tarahumara (or Rarámuri, as they call themselves), the canyon is a familiar homeland. Over the centuries, they have beaten their trails into the remotest corners of this convoluted landscape, learning its stern secrets and wringing a living from the steep and stony ground.

"Three things in particular are significant about the Tarahumara," says William L. Merrill, a curator of anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History and a leading authority on the people who inhabit the Copper Canyon region. "They remain among the most traditional of all native peoples in North America. They have maintained a distinctive identity despite nearly 400 years of Spanish and Mexican pressures to assimilate. And with perhaps as many as 70,000 members, they are also one of the largest Indian societies in all of North America."

Though the Tarahumara have been studied by curious anthropologists since the 1890s, the history of attempts by Westerners to come to grips with the people reads in part as the triumph of a priori notions over direct observation. It would not be until 1988, with the publication of Merrill's *Rarámuri Souls*, that an ethnographic work would do full justice to the intricacy and subtlety of Tarahumara culture. Before writing his book, Merrill lived for 31 months in the village of Rejogochi. His treatise elegantly analyzes the central contributions of oratory, religion, the concept of soul, healing practices and funerary rites to the configuration of a unique lifeway. *Rarámuri Souls* has also recently become the first monograph about the people to be translated into their own language.

At one o'clock in the valley below Samachique, the women's race began. Representing rival settlements in the neighborhood, two teams of eight—including girls—lined up at the starting line. Each team had a pair of interlinked hoops made of bent vines wrapped in cloth. As we watched, a woman on each team snagged her team's hoop with the curved tip of a peeled stick and flung it some ten yards along the path. Then she and her teammates ran after it, repeating the process. In a kind of endless relay, the members took turns advancing the hoop while their teammates tagged along, more or less together.

The teams dwindled in the distance; through binoculars, I saw them round a far post and head back. Meanwhile wagers were laid in pairs on a blanket, with a team organizer jotting the bets down in a notebook: I saw woven belts tied together, peso notes wrapped in kerchiefs, and a five-peso coin imbedded in a bar of soap. (The Tarahumara word for "betting," *buréma*, literally means "linking" or "tying together.")

The women vanished from view and reappeared 35 minutes later. A local explained that each lap was about four miles in length and that the race would end after ten laps had been run, or one team threw in the towel. Wearing sweaters, skirts and plastic shoes or tire-sole sandals, these women were running a course longer than an Olympic marathon and a half, up and down a trail alternately rocky and

The Tarahumara can compete with the world's best; in a race near Samachique, men (above) sling a wooden ball for 80 miles, and women (left) toss hoops over a 40-mile course.

marshy, jumping streams, crawling through fences, all the while flinging cloth hoops ahead of them!

Later, two teams of men and boys lined up on the same course. They propelled a sphere, about the size of a softball, carved of wood, not kicking it soccer-style, but deftly rolling it onto their bare toes and flinging it into the air with swings of their legs. The men's lap was twice as long as the women's: each finisher would have run 80 miles!

During the lulls when no racers were in sight, I watched the crowd mill and gossip, then read the vivid account of the ball race in Wendell Bennett and Robert Zingg's classic 1935 ethnographic work, *The Tarahumara*. Some of the preparations I could verify with my eyes, such as the animal-hoof rattles dangling from special racing belts to keep the runners awake. Bennett and Zingg reported that leg bones taken from ancient burial caves were ground and secretly mixed with the dirt on the track to ambush opponents—the Tarahumara believing that the dead would invisibly reach up and seize the runners' legs, crippling them. Wondering whether this trickery continued, I later got my answer from Merrill. Fifty years after Bennett and Zingg, the Smithsonian anthropologist came upon a washed-out human bone along a path in nearby Rejogochi; his Tarahumara companion explained that a local sorcerer had buried it there just before a race.

We had to leave long before the contest was over. As we drove into the night, I pictured the tireless athletes flinging hoops and balls into the weeds, somehow finding them in the dark, then jogging onward, all for the sake of a neighborhood's glory.

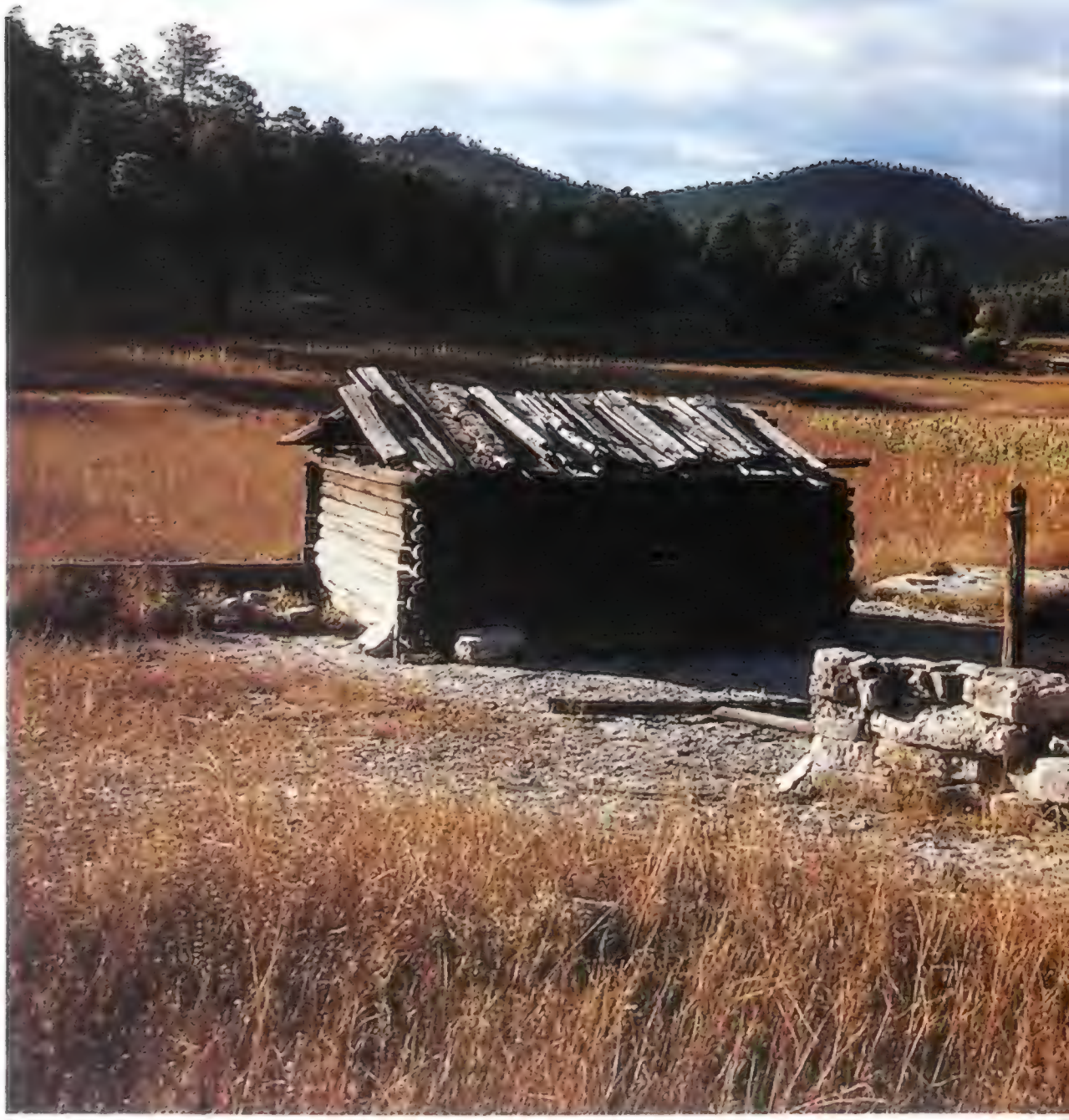
Of the estimated 70,000 Tarahumara speakers, perhaps 50,000 live in hamlets and farmsteads scattered across some 13,000 square miles of the Sierra Madre. Before the Spanish arrived, the Tarahumara homeland was almost twice as large, stretching well out onto the Chihuahua plains. To avoid the Spanish colonists—miners, missionaries, ranchers, farmers—many Tarahumara moved westward, where they intermarried with other Indian tribes. There they opened up new lands, surviving thanks to a remarkable hybridization of the invaders' culture with their own.

In precontact times, the Tarahumara raised corn, their staple, along streams in fields enriched by annual floods. In the rugged high sierra, floodplains were narrow and most of the soil was too poor to grow corn, but the livestock introduced by the Spanish changed all that. By the 18th century, the people had fully incorporated Old World animals, especially cattle, goats and sheep, into their economy. They seldom milked their cows or goats, and only rarely slaughtered these animals for food. Rather, they tended their beasts to collect the manure—which they used to fertilize small fields in the high mountains. Today, 75 percent of the Tarahumara diet is corn.

UPON THIS FRUGAL ECONOMY, Tarahumara culture is based today. In some areas, the people spend the warmer months in the mountains, retreating in the colder months to second homes inside rock shelters in the warm bottoms of the barrancas, where their vulnerable sheep and goats can survive the winter.

The origins of the Tarahumara are shrouded in legends and the sketchy hypotheses of ethnography. They are of Uto-Aztecan linguistic stock, linked thus to such far-flung peoples as the Ute, Shoshone and Hopi of the American West, as well as the speakers of Nahuatl languages in Mexico and Central America. From where, and when, they arrived in their corner of Chihuahua, no one can say.

One of the first Westerners to come among the Tarahumara was the great Norwegian explorer Carl Lumholtz (SMITHSONIAN, November 1996), who spent five years in the 1890s traveling in the Sierra Madre. Lumholtz dwelled for one year with the Tarahumara, once he assuaged their terror at his intrusion. (By his own account, the Norwegian was suspected of being a god who made rain with his camera and a killer of fat girls and children. As he did with other Indian groups, he may have charmed them with his singing and sleight of hand.) Yet after contact with these canny highlanders, Lumholtz, still importing the culture-bound judgments of his day, dismissed their art as "clumsy," their pottery as "crude" and—despite its adaptive sophistication—their cave architecture as that of "troglodytes."



In 1936, the French dramaturge Antonin Artaud spent a month among the Tarahumara engaging in a bizarre quest for personal transformation through an encounter with the primeval, in the form of "pure red Indians" who lived "in a style that predates the Flood." Artaud returned to France extolling a people who "live as if they were already dead. They . . . draw magical powers from the contempt they have for civilization."

As if in reaction to such Gallic idealism, one of the first professional ethnographers to study the Tarahumara, American Robert Zingg, went to the other extreme. After months in the field, Zingg portrayed the people as "philistines," their religion marked by an "unrelieved drabness"; even Tarahumara dreams were judged "crass, material, and commonplace."

Only with the recent work of Merrill and a handful of other anthropologists has Tarahumara culture been freed from the biases of such seekers as Lumholtz, Artaud and Zingg.

One of the greatest threats to the Tarahumara lifeway comes in the

In the village of Basigochi (left), the neighbors of Abram Peréz take a break during a house-raising (above). Logs are planed by hand and slotted together without nails. Abram's daughter (below) prepares the workers a hearty meal.

tourism that is beginning to burgeon in Copper Canyon. (The Mexican government plans a massive tourism project, along the lines of the push that built Cancún out of an isolated beach.) Thanks to the Chihuahua al Pacífico Railroad, conceived in 1872 but completed only in 1961, a daily flock of tourists now tiptoes to the edge of Copper Canyon, overnighting in rustic hotels at Creel and Divisadero. Small numbers of Tarahumara hang out on the hotel patios, offering pine needle baskets and dances for a few pesos. At Divisadero, hotel guides daily walk their tour groups a few hundred yards to the "Tarahumara Caves," where Indians in situ ply their ancient crafts.

"Tourism is a two-edged sword," says Merrill. "It's easy to see the negative impact it's having on the Tarahumara way of life. But taking tourists to places like the Tarahumara Caves allows the majority of the people to retain privacy in their daily lives. And many Tarahumara value the tourist trade, because it gives them a market for the things they make and money to buy food and other goods."

Last October, it took only a modest effort for Natalie and me to escape the tourist gauntlet. Our driver, Carlos, found a guide who lived in Cusárare. A wiry 53, with a weather-beaten face, Reyes Ramirez is half Tarahumara, half mestizo (mixed Mexican-Indian). We drove south on the main highway, then, under Reyes' guidance, coaxed our Chevy Suburban five miles along a stony rut of a lumber road that corkscrewed past stern cliffs and through some marshy woods.

Abruptly we emerged in a clearing, across which sprawled a scatter of wooden buildings. The locals were shyly astonished to see us. Most of the men were building a cabin; inside their homes, women minded their babies and cooked; in the distance, young girls tended flocks of goats. We had arrived in the Tarahumara village of Basigochi, which we were told no Anglos had ever before visited.

Some 60 people live in Basigochi, 12 interrelated families. The patriarch is Abram Peréz. As was customary, Tarahumara from miles around had

walked to help erect the structure in a single day. Their only compensation was a hearty meal—corn tortillas and a stew of beans and prickly pear pads—that Abram's wife and daughters were preparing.

For hours I watched the deft craftsmanship of the workers, as they planed logs with a hand ax and slotted the cabin together without using nails. I eavesdropped on their Tarahumara conversation, beguiled by its glottal stops and nuances of pitch. Then I hiked up the slope beyond the village and gazed down at Basigochi. The grassy basin, enclosed by forested ridges on three sides, looked Arcadian; but I was under no illusion about the marginal life below. Abram's entire fortune consisted of two horses and 15 sheep—not a single cow. He often gets a government subsidy to buy fertilizer; this year, when the subsidy was late in coming, Abram's corn crop failed. Glancing around at the outlying fields, he had mused philosophically, "Somebody in the valley will always have corn."

THE TARAHUMARA LANDSCAPE has a deceptive surface. Viewed from the hotel balconies at Divisadero, Copper Canyon looks like a paradise: every snapshot you take has an outsize postcard beauty. Yet I sensed how formidable a wilderness this was to travel through, let alone to inhabit. It seemed important to find out firsthand what it had meant for the Tarahumara, centuries ago, to push into these highlands.

Carlos and I left Natalie and Reyes in Basigochi and set off for a distant plateau east of Cusárare. That afternoon, we pulled off the dirt road into the ponderosa pines to car-camp. We were at 8,000 feet atop the Mesa de Babureachi, smack on the Continental Divide. It was a windless night, the sky thick with stars, a waxing half-moon low in the west.

Like other Tarahumara, María Crucita doesn't know the origins of the rock art.

In the morning, we set off on a hike. Perusing my copy of a topographic map, I plotted a cross-country loop from our campsite. I thought the hike would take four hours; in the event, we endured an eight-and-a-half-hour ordeal, barely making it back before nightfall.

We followed an old lumber road down a tributary of the Río Conchos that deteriorated into a faint path, then vanished. We bushwhacked on, determined to reach the river. When we did, we found a surging turquoise torrent whose banks were strewn with giant boulders. Leaning over the river, making a tricky move to sidle past an overhanging boulder, I heard a close, scratchy noise. "Look out!" yelled Carlos, just behind me. "Rattlesnake!" I leapt backward, managing to land on other rocks. The snake, hidden on a dark ledge, had coiled ready to strike, only six inches from my stomach.

We abandoned the Conchos and headed back south up a narrow ravine. I was intrigued by the unfamiliar flora: weeping pines, their needles drooping earthward, and elephant-ear oaks with their huge, shiny leaves. But the bushwhacking soon grew desperate. Carlos collapsed with exhaustion; I had to coax him up through steep thickets. Suddenly I was sick myself, retching with the dry heaves. At the time I thought I had heatstroke; later I guessed flu or food poisoning. It was all we could do to drag ourselves onward.

During that long, arduous foray, we found not a single farmstead, met not another person. Yet, we found signs of the Tarahumara: felled trees in the middle of nowhere; under one obscure boulder, a pristine ancient metate. Most remarkably, beneath a towering cliff, we discovered the crumbling remains of crude stone room-blocks. On the cliff wall above we saw relatively recent rock art, drawn in red ocher: radiant pictures of women wearing their many layers of skirts, a portrait of the Cusárare mission (founded in 1744), and a startlingly powerful rendering of the Chihuahua al Pacífico train.

By 1610, Jesuit missionaries had entered Tarahumara country, hungry for souls to save; by the end of the century, a series of silver strikes had drawn hordes of miners deep into the territory. Fleeing the epidemics, forced labor and acculturation that had decimated other Indian tribes in Mexico after Cortés' conquest, many Tarahumara had migrated to some of the more inaccessible reaches of the Sierra Madre.

Several days later, deep in the sweltering Batopilas Canyon, the four of us witnessed the legacy of the Spanish invasion. Reached only by a narrow, rocky dirt track, on a low shelf beside the Río Batopilas, in a blissful setting among disused orchards, stands the church of Satevó. A kind of myth has grown up around this astonishing structure: one romantic brochure on Copper Canyon calls it the "lost cathedral," insisting that nothing can be learned of its history.

The research of William Merrill, however, has uncovered the truth.

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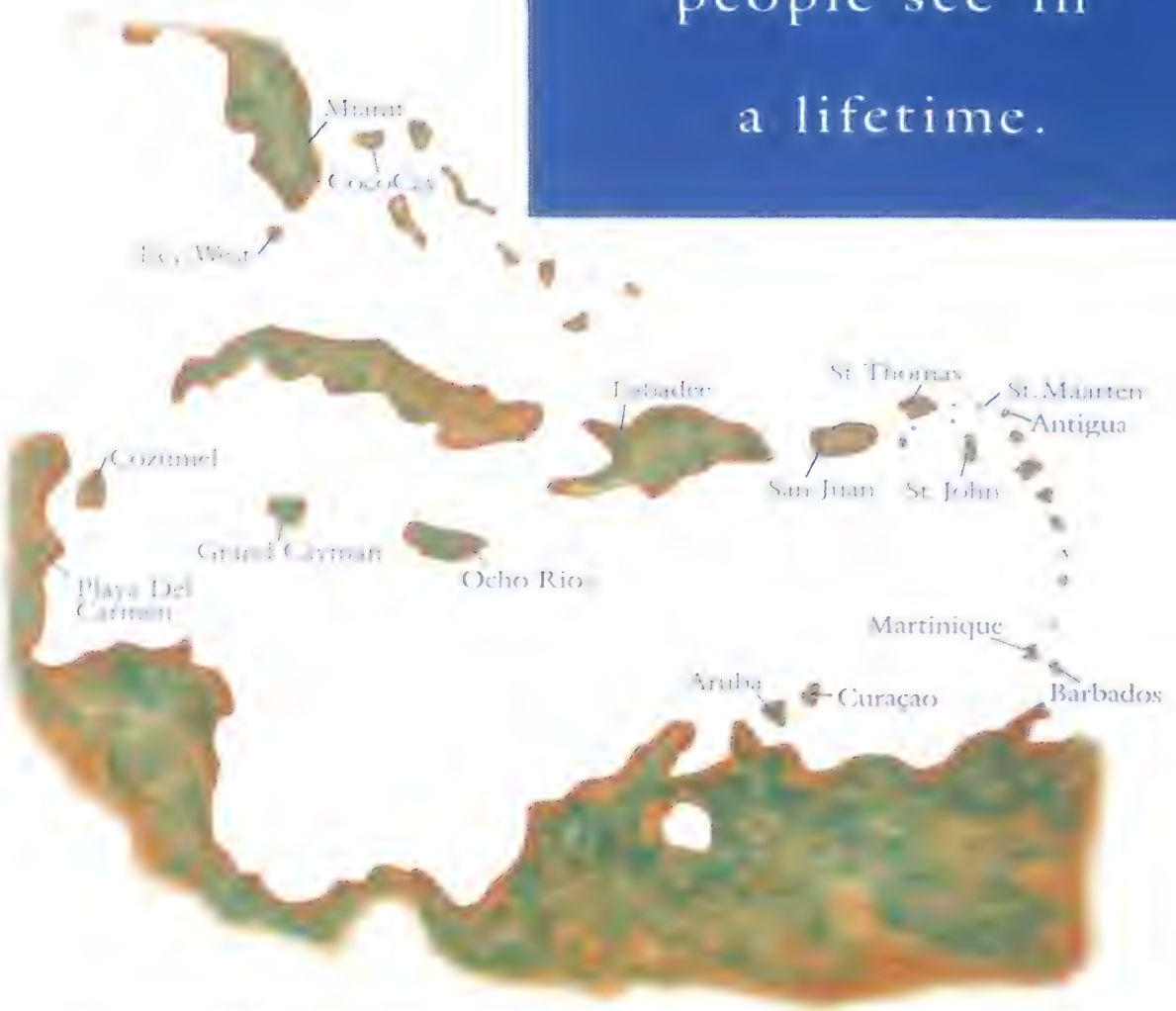

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Here, near the middle of the 18th century, the Jesuits built a modest place of worship. Some 50 years later, Franciscan missionaries directed the erection of a far more ambitious church: a kind of neo-Byzantine temple in red-clay bricks, with three domes, four half-domes and a bell tower.

We pulled open the heavy wooden door and marveled at the simple frescoes adorning the interior, which mix Old World and Indian themes: ears of corn flowering from abstract chalices, showers of blue stars. Yet even as I admired the church's quirky grandiosity, I felt a chill as I imagined the priests hectoring their gangs of Tarahumara workers to build this tabernacle designed to obliterate their own gods.

The church of Satevó—the "lost cathedral" where frescoes mix Old World and Indian themes.

BATOPILAS ITSELF, WHICH DATES from the late 17th century, is a run-down riverside strip of a former silver town. Mestizo rather than Tarahumara, Batopilas survives mainly because of its drug traffic; a guide who knew Carlos had warned us not to hike downstream from town, lest we enter the domain of *bandidos*. The place felt as seedy and edgy as it looked. I watched, bemused, as slick young vaqueros faced off in shiny new pickups in the town's only (one-lane) street, staring with steely malevolence until one backed off and let the other pass.

The whole region felt dangerous and unfriendly, as was proved in a dramatic mishap on the road between Batopilas and La Bufa, an ex-copper-mining outpost. An hour before sunset, poking along the narrow dirt highway, which clung to a shelf above a 200-foot cliff, Carlos—otherwise a careful driver—looked in the rearview mirror to study a Tarahumara man in traditional dress walking up the road. In the passenger seat, nearest the cliff, I watched unbelieving as our vehicle headed straight off an inside hairpin. Before I could yell a warning, the right two wheels went off the edge.

This is it, I thought, anticipating the plunge to a violent death. The car canted wildly right, slid grinding through the gravel on its driveshaft, started to roll—then magically stopped. I blurted, "Out the uphill doors!" All of us bolted from our death trap. Later we saw that the right rear tire, digging a trench through the gravel, had come to rest on a buried rock wall built to shore up the bend. Three inches of stone had saved us from the void.

Beside himself with shock and dismay, Carlos set out to hike five miles into the night to La Bufa for help. Shortly, a vehicle stopped; two men peered suspiciously at us, then said they could do nothing. They passed Carlos without offering him a ride; he smelled marijuana from inside the vehicle. At La Bufa, the equally suspicious residents claimed they could offer no help. Disconsolate, Carlos set out on foot to return.

Two hours after our accident, a big truck edged near. Two distributors from Chihuahua, Jorge and Carmelo, inched their big rig past our Suburban, which half-blocked the road. They stopped and took out a flimsy chain and hooked up our bumpers. A tow would be useless; the chain would probably break. Carmelo got in his truck; then, to our horror, Jorge climbed into our listing Suburban. We screamed at him to get out, but linguistic confusion, the darkness hiding the void and the man's crazy machismo won the day. Starting the engine, holding the door open ready to jump, Jorge inched the Suburban forward as Carmelo's truck pulled it free. Immediately, our screams turned to cheers.

It was a relief, then, to flee the barranca of Batopilas and head back north into the heart of the Sierra Tarahumara. At the crossing of the Río Urique, we came across a school bus full of Mennonite missionaries from Ohio, bent on saving the souls of the benighted Indians.

The three-and-a-half centuries of Christian effort to convert the Tarahumara point to a central paradox in their culture. Today, crosses grace the hilltops above their settlements, and many Tarahumara will walk as far as ten miles on Sundays to attend services in the nearest Catholic church. Yet, as Merrill shows in *Rarámuri Souls*, the people have, in effect, taken on Catholic rites without internalizing the doctrine that informs those acts. Their own notions of the cosmos and human nature remain paramount—that each person, for instance, possesses many souls, ranging from large to small, which control thought, emotions, sleep and dreams, and which flee the body during drinking, causing intoxication; or that their principal gods, identified with the Christian God and the Virgin Mary, are also closely associated with the sun and moon.

Day after day, as we ranged through the Sierra Tarahumara, we came across panels of pictographs on the cliffs of

volcanic tuff. Some of this rock art was plainly historic, executed in red ocher by the Tarahumara themselves: stylized portraits of horses, mission churches, the chuffing Chihuahua al Pacífico train. Yet some, usually painted in chalky white, looked prehistoric: deer grazing, rigid abstract humanoids wielding bows and arrows.

As we lingered in one alcove near Cusárare, staring at superimposed pictographs, a young woman carrying a baby visited us, offering to sell dolls she had carved out of soft pine. Her name was María Crucita. Yes, she told Carlos, the white paintings were very old, and she had no idea who had made them.

This was the answer we gleaned every time we asked about the tantalizing white pictographs. They were very old; they were here when the Tarahumara first came; nobody knew which people had drawn them. In the 1890s, Carl Lumholtz was told a legend about a race of giants ("as big as pine-trees") that had occupied the canyon country when the Tarahumara arrived. The giants ate Tarahumara children and ravished the women. At last, the people exterminated the giants by tricking them into eating a mixture of corn and a poisonous extract from the chilicote tree.

AS IN MANY ANOTHER BACK-country corner of Mexico, virtually no archaeological research has been accomplished in the Copper Canyon region. Who inhabited the highlands before the Tarahumara remains a mystery.

For our last excursion, we hired a pair of Tarahumara guides at Divisadero to take us by old trails halfway down into the depths of the Barranca del Cobre. Seventy years old, wizened and tough, a man with the air of having seen everything under the sun, Florencio "Lencho" Mancinas loaded up two burros with our inordinate piles of gear. His accomplice was Gilo, Lencho's nephew, as muscularly handsome as a vaquero in a John Ford western.

On a cool, windy day, we hiked down a path that wound between cliffs and along sharp ridges. Soon we came to a tiny village nestled beneath a spring in a green, south-facing basin. Wacajipare, home to only ten Tarahumara, was deserted at the moment, for its inhabitants had made their daily 2,000-foot climb to the rim in hopes of selling a basket or a doll to the railroad tourists. Once more the idyllic setting camouflaged a hard life: Lencho pointed out that this year's corn crop had failed for lack of rain, the bean crop from early frost.

We climbed across a steep slope until we gained a broad saddle called

Tarahumara lifeways are changing: Francisco Moreno (above) carries corn stalks from his fields to feed his livestock, whose manure may fertilize his next crop, while Cristina Vecino (below) weaves baskets and carves pine bark to sell to tourists.

At home in Cusárare, guide Reyes Ramirez, half Tarahumara and half mestizo, plays a traditional Tarahumara flute made of local river cane.

Puerto de los Naranjos (Pass of the Orange Trees) where we set up camp. That evening we sat around the campfire as the full moon rose in the east, transforming the shadowy ridges and gorges into a Maxfield Parrish fairy-scape. Though he was as fit as a young man, Lencho chain-smoked his Faros cigarettes, the cheapest and strongest you can buy in Chihuahua. Now, as Carlos translated my queries, he waxed reflective.

"They accept that there were others living here before them," Carlos paraphrased, "but they avoid talking about them. Maybe they were *gigantes*. In some caves, far from the tourists, they have found very big human bones."

I asked about the legacy of the Spanish entrada. Lencho muttered and threw his Faros butt into the fire. "The Indians still feel great anger against the Spanish," Carlos interpreted. "So they don't trust Mexicans like me—or *norteamericanos* either." Carlos chuckled, interpolating, "We're all the same to Lencho."

The next day, as we hiked back up to the rim, Lencho pointed out a hidden cliff dwelling and gave us permission to visit it. Out of fear and respect for the dead, Lencho declined to join us; but younger and less traditional Gilo had no such qualms.

NASTY BUSHWHACKING AND AN exposed ledge walk took us to the ruin. As I came near the cave, I drew a sharp breath. Inside the roofless stone-and-mud rooms, human bones lay scattered. No one had ever come here to bury the dead. Like the Navajo in the Southwest, the Tarahumara often abandon a house when someone dies in it. Yet as Gilo pointed out, "The skulls are all missing. Someone came and took them."

For an hour we paced before the ruin, careful to disturb nothing. I found red potsherds in the dirt, finger marks in the mortar that chinked the walls, grooves in the bedrock made by sharpening flint blades. Pictographs of sticklike, headless humanoids painted above the buildings looked remarkably like Anasazi art I had seen in Utah and Arizona.

"It is called La Cueva de los Gentiles," Gilo explained, distilling the tales Lencho had passed down to him. A "gentile," I knew, was a Tarahumara who had not been baptized. "Lencho thinks the people died about 250 years ago. They say they starved to death. Lots of people died."

I pressed further, wondering whether an epidemic had wiped out the settlement, but that was all Gilo knew. He was anxious to leave: even he, the worldly Tarahumara, found this house of the dead unsettling.

I lingered on. Soon we would start our drive back to Chihuahua. The rapturous night under the full moon on the Pass of the Orange Trees, this macabre tableau of scattered skeletons, everything we had seen and felt during our journey . . . the pleasures and puzzles of the Sierra Tarahumara had gotten under my skin, and I felt regret at how little I really knew.

Contributor David Roberts is working on a book on Kit Carson. Natalie Fobes' book I Dream Alaska *was published last month.*

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The Horse Whisperer

LEGENDARY TRAINER BUCK BRANNAMAN RELIES ON TRUST, NOT TERROR

BY PAUL TRACHTMAN

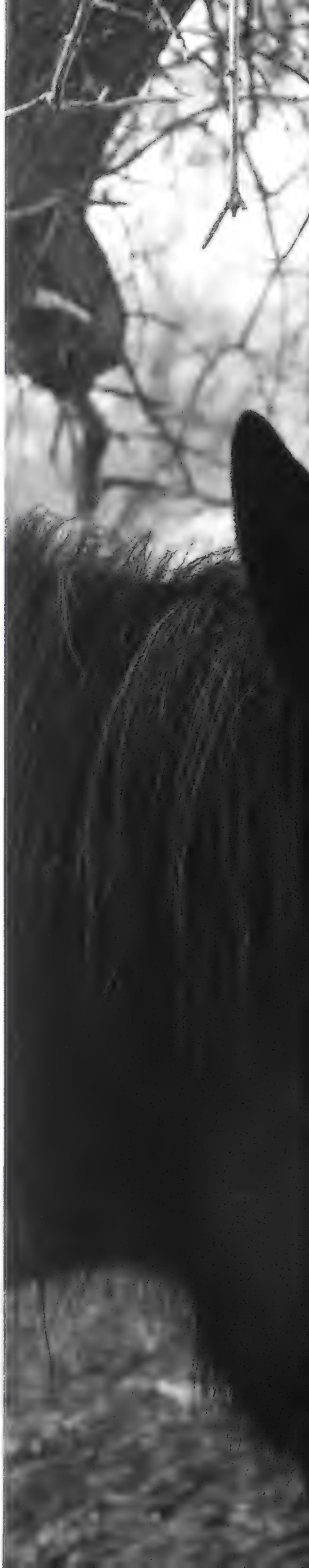
"THE WAY A PERSON SITS ON A HORSE is exactly the way a mountain lion would, climbing on its back with your legs reaching down over it," says Buck Brannaman, a lanky Wyoming cowboy, as he gets ready to mount a skittish colt for the first time. "So it's easy to understand why a horse wouldn't be that interested in a person crawling up on top of him like some would-be mountain lion and clamping down his feet!" It's the way Buck sees the world, from the horse's point of view.

He's been working with the colt for more than an hour, getting it used to a lead rope, a halter, then a saddle, and letting it know he won't hurt it. "He hasn't been worked with before," Buck says, lifting himself on the stirrup, leaning over the saddle, letting the horse adjust to his weight, then getting back down. "He's scared. And he should be scared. That's how he survives on the range. What you're dealing with is thousands of years of self-preservation that you're asking the horse to just ignore, and allow you to be there." Now he gets a foot in the stirrup again and swings up into the saddle. The colt flinches a little, its muscles quivering. Buck rubs its mane, and the colt settles down, chewing things over and deciding the cowboy's not a predator after all.

"He's pretty flinchy, but in time he won't be," Buck says. "He's not mean. But whether they're scared and bucking you off, or spoiled and bucking you off, gravity works about the same either way." He laughs, knowingly. "So you need to get them comfortable, to where they don't mind you being around them."

Buck flaps his feet lightly in the stirrups, and the horse starts forward. Before you know it, horse and human look as comfortable with each other as two partners dancing a waltz. What is going on here is ordinarily accomplished by "breaking" a horse, using methods more suited to the rodeo than the ballroom. But Buck is no ordinary horseman. He is demonstrating his way of turning frightened horses into friends, a way that has more to do with respect and trust than mastery or manhandling.

This particular demonstration is tak-



At home on his ranchland, Brannaman communes with a mare he calls Sweet Pea.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TED WOOD

Set in the rugged country near Sheridan, Wyoming, Brannaman's ranch is a 1,200-acre spread.

ing place at the National Western Stock Show, Rodeo and Horse Show in Denver, Colorado, an event regarded as the Super Bowl of stock shows. Although Buck has been giving clinics in horsemanship for more than 15 years in every part of the United States and abroad, this is his first brush with stock show celebrity. He's more than ready for it. He had to fly in from California for the event, straight from a set for the Robert Redford movie *The Horse Whisperer*, opening this month in theaters around the country. For the film, Buck taught Redford to handle horses with the Brannaman touch.

The name "horse whisperer" appears to be an ancient one from the British Isles, given to people whose rapport with horses seemed almost mystical. For Buck, it's just a romantic metaphor for what he does every day. In fact, Redford's movie and the best-selling novel from which it is adapted were largely inspired by the real character of Buck Brannaman. But he isn't putting much stock in all the celebrity. "When the dust dies down and this movie's in the bargain bin at Kmart," he laughs, "I'll still have my day job that I had before all this started."

That "day job" takes Buck on the road nine months of the year, March through November, driving a two-ton Freightliner truck and hauling a 24-foot horse trailer with five or six of his own horses in it, to clinics where, for two or three days at a time, he helps people with starting colts, horsemanship, ranch roping, cow working. This year he's scheduled for 45 clinics and demonstrations in 16 states, from Limerick, Maine, to Bakersfield, California. Along the way, he tries to fit in a couple of clinics in Sheridan, Wyoming, where he runs a small ranch with his wife, Mary, and their three girls.

For Buck, his day job is as much a passion as a profession. He is carrying on a tradition of horsemanship that he learned from Ray Hunt, now a 67-year-old cowboy who preaches a gospel of "thinking harmony with horses." That tradition was handed down from Hunt's own guru, a living legend in the horse world named Tom Dorrance. Now in his 80s, Dorrance is still giving clinics and teaching what he calls "true unity," or the willing communication between horse and human. When Ray once asked where *he'd* learned this, Tom said, "Ray, I learned it from the horse."

Buck still recalls the day that, as a young ranch hand, he first saw Ray Hunt "work magic" with horses at a clinic in Bozeman, Montana. "I watched the entire day and left amazed and confused and a little ashamed," he says. "Everything I couldn't do on a horse, he could do." From that day on, he was a Ray Hunt disciple. At that same clinic, he also met Tom Dorrance. "Tom Dorrance," he says now, "has compiled so much information in

his mind in the past 80 years that he has to get the credit for this revolution of new methods of working with horses." According to one admirer of all three men, they represent a direct lineage: "Tom Dorrance is Yoda, Ray Hunt is Obi-Wan Kenobi and Buck Brannaman is Luke Skywalker!"

Buck would dismiss this as another romantic metaphor, but there's a lot to it. George Lucas has said that *Star Wars* was about redemption. What Buck's mentors have handed down is also something akin to a spiritual quest, a way to rid oneself of one's own devils in learning to become one with the horse. "So often people start horses with a sort of caveman mentality," Buck says. "For some people, working with the horse is just a way of stroking their own egos. Sometimes they have a lot of emotional baggage. Sometimes they lack awareness of their surroundings. That's why horses have so many problems with humans."

The first time I talked to Buck, I asked if there was anything I could read to help me understand what he does. He didn't mention his own book about starting horses, but a slim volume about communication and consciousness called *A Kinship With All Life*. That book describes all animals as spiritual and mental beings who can read our hidden intentions and thoughts. At Buck's clinics, there's not much talk about this aspect of horsemanship. The word "spiritual" isn't part of his cowboy vocabulary. "People might get hung up on some cosmic image of it all," he says. "And it's really not that, it's something perfectly natural, something that the horse has to offer us, that some of us have to offer the horse. I think it's there for anybody who wants it."

Those who come to his clinics, whether they are starting colts or improving their riding skills, aren't given much of a chance to think cosmic thoughts: there's more than

"It's something that the horse offers us, that some of us have to offer the horse. It's there for anybody."

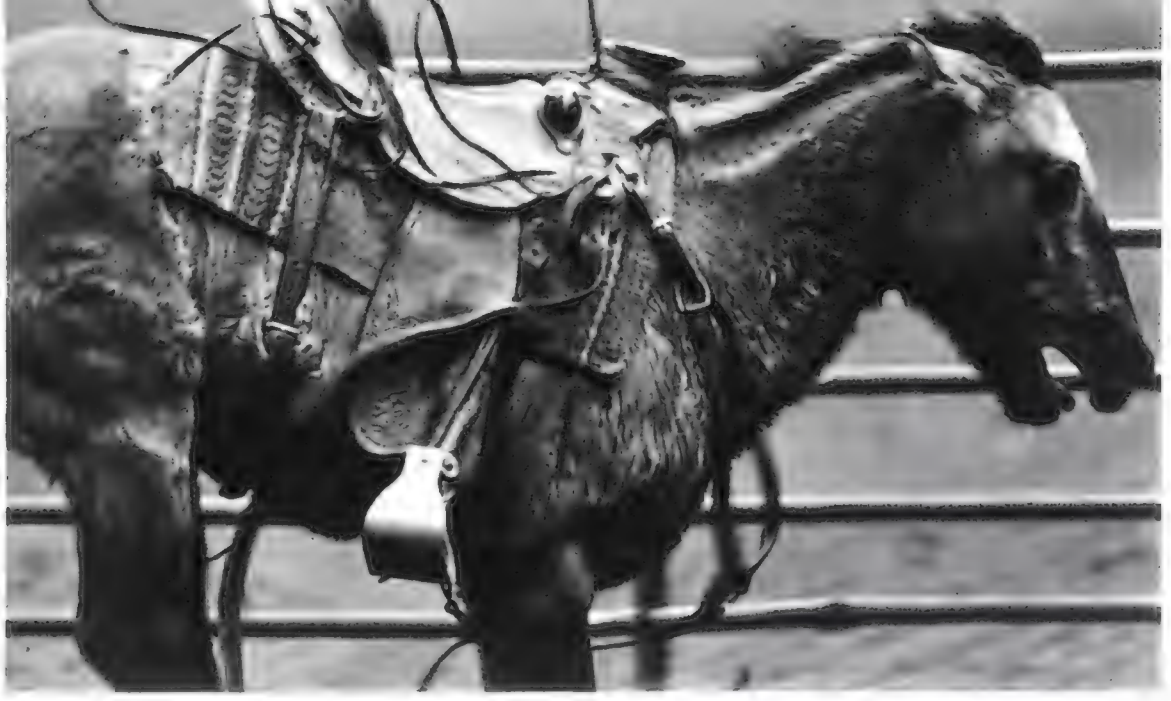
enough work to do as Buck points out that their timing is off, their balance isn't right, their awareness isn't sharp enough to catch what the horse is trying to tell them through its expression, its body language, its "feel"—or that they just don't know what to look for. Buck shows them why a troubled horse gets troubled, and what to do about it. There is plenty of practical advice, and plain horse sense.

After roping a colt around the neck, he lets it run around the pen at the end of his lasso. "Think of the rope as elastic," he says. "If it pulls, I keep the tension but let it slide through my hand a little, so it doesn't jerk the horse. I'm asking the horse to yield to the pressure of the rope, letting him find a way to come off that pressure. Any time the rope jerks, a horse will pull back, but it's the human that teaches it to pull back." As the colt realizes that the rope is not going to hurt him, his eye darts toward Buck. Instantly Buck releases the tension on the rope, and the colt stops and turns in to face him, as if asking, what's going on? It's the beginning of a friendship rather than a fight.

This is far from the old cowboy way, which Teddy Roosevelt, a rancher before becoming President, described in his 1896 book on ranch life. After roping a horse, he said, a bronc obuster holds the rope against his hip, "at the same time leaning so far back, with the legs straight in front, that the heels dig deep into the ground when the strain comes, and the horse, running out with the slack of the rope, is brought up standing, or even turned head over heels by the shock."

Buck makes what he does look so ordinary that it's hard to see why this way of working with horses is still so uncommon. If this is "horse whispering," where's the mystery? In search of answers, I drive up into the northern

Brannaman and his wife, Mary, accompanied by their dog, Ace, haul hay for the horses.



Watching Buck work with these horses from the ground up is, in fact, a lot like learning a new language.

reaches of the Cowboy State, across the wind-punished, frostbitten Wyoming landscape of red clay, scrub pine, sagebrush and open grassland spotted with herds of stoic livestock, scattered windmills, old battlefields, and remote ranch houses cowering beneath huge cottonwoods. I'm heading for Buck's ranch on the outskirts of Sheridan, a city where the local high school teams are called the Broncs and Lady Broncs, in a state whose license plate is stamped with a bucking horse and rider. An outdoor thermometer nailed to the door of a café has zero degrees in the middle of the scale, with the temperature markings going as far below zero as above. There's nothing gentle about the landscape, or the weather or the history of this place where Buck Brannaman makes his home. But I forget all that, warming up in the kitchen of the ranch. Buck is getting ready to head for a big barn-like arena he's just built, to start some young colts he hasn't worked with before. His wife, Mary, is dressing their 3-year-old daughter, Reata, named for a Spanish-style braided rawhide rope used by the old vaqueros of California. Reata is clutching a toy compact, and Mary patiently tells her, "You have to leave that here. You can't take this to the barn. Cowgirls don't wear makeup in the barn."

Watching Buck work with these horses from the ground up over the next few days is, in fact, a lot like learning a new language, one in which the flick of an ear, a sidelong glance, a licking of lips or a shift of weight may be all the horse offers, while the human responds with a slight change in posture, a step back or to the side, a lifted hand, or sometimes something as intangible as a change of expression. "There's no secret to this," he says. "I just know what we need to do in order for both of us to speak the same language and dance the same dance."

He's working in a round corral, with no corners where a colt could get into trouble, and working mostly from the saddle of a gelding named Abe, who seems to go where Buck wants without his asking. Buck goes through the same basic steps in starting all the colts, adjusting things to fit each different personality. First he ropes a colt, and works with the colt on the end of the lass rope, helping it to free up its hindquarters and frontquarters so that its feet aren't stuck with fear. Next, he wants to desensitize the colt to things that might frighten it, bothering it with a flag, tossing a saddle blanket over its back, slapping its sides with the coils of his rope, until it isn't so bothered anymore. Then he fastens a halter over its head and works with the colt on the end of the halter rope: more practice to free up its front and hindquarters, and teaching it to back up and to follow his lead. When he senses a change, even a slight effort to do what he asks, he puts slack in the rope and rubs the colt's face or neck reassuringly.

After this, he saddles the colt and drives it off around the pen until it is comfortable with the saddle, and then draws its attention in toward him as he steps back and stands still at the middle of the pen. As the horse turns away from the fence to face him—a wonderful moment called hooking

During a demonstration of his techniques at a Denver stock show, Brannaman allows an unbroken colt (top) to adjust, riderless, to the unfamiliar weight of a saddle. As the colt calms down, he approaches Brannaman, accepting the trainer's touch.

Establishing a connection is key to Brannaman's approach: he leans into one stirrup and over the horse (above), letting the animal adjust gradually to his weight. Eventually, Brannaman will be able to ride the horse, as he succeeds in doing at the stock show.

on—something important has been accomplished: "I've got the horse to focus on me mentally," Buck says, "without being physically pulled. I want him to feel he'd rather be with me than anywhere else." Before very long the colt is following him around the pen without any rope. "It should never be a fight," he says. "If it's a fight, you've lost ground."

After several days on the ranch, it's easy to see why Buck calls himself "the horse's friend" and how fluent he is in its native language. But I suspect there's more to what he does than meets the eye. I don't get a chance to ask him about this just yet. He's too busy getting his gear together, loading two horses into a trailer and heading off with a friend to try to catch a steer that's been running wild in the foothills behind a neighboring ranch since it escaped the roundup last fall.

Buck and his partner disappear over a frozen ridge, silhouetted against the morning sun. When they return that afternoon, they've got a roped steer and a story that gets better with each telling. Buck is leading the steer with a rope around its neck, and his partner trails with a rope on its hind leg. The steer has been "on the fight" all the way down. Finally, it digs in and won't go another step.

Buck spends a good deal of the next couple of hours trying to get the steer more interested in moving than in staying put, leaning back in his saddle to put a little tension on the rope, flicking the rope so it bothers the steer, getting his partner to bother the animal from the rear, waving a tarpaulin flag at it, talking to it and just waiting. All he gets in return are a few steps or a few yards at a time, or a sudden lunge as the steer tries to hook Brannaman's horse with its horns. Just as you'd think he'd have lost all patience, Buck leans over in the saddle, looks the steer in the eye and says, "Come on, honey!" It's almost dark when they finally collect some lengths of metal fencing and build a small pen around the steer, right where it is, figuring they'll load it into a trailer tomorrow.

Later Buck tells the story of the chase, how they heard the steer sneaking through the brush at the bottom of a deep, narrow draw. When the steer emerged out the other end of the draw, Buck roped it. Then he let it run until it slowed down and suddenly turned back and ran right under his horse, a sorrel gelding named Biff. But Biff was quick enough, and the steer didn't have much in the way of horns, so the horse wasn't hurt. The real danger was chasing the steer through a prairie dog town. "There was a hole about every four feet," Buck says, "but Biff was raised in country where they had lots of badger and gopher holes, so I just kind of closed my eyes and left it up to him."

Biff was almost an outlaw when Buck bought him and started to work with him, a horse who'd outfought his owners and never been broken. "He'd paw you or kick you or strike you

anyway he could. He was very dangerous to be around for a couple of years," Buck says. "And he's no prettier now than when I got him, but on the inside he's very attractive. He's made it, and he's my friend."

On my last day at the ranch, I corner Buck and ask, What is it he sees in a horse that others don't? Is it the "spiritual part of the horse," as Tom Dorrance calls it? He doesn't answer right away. Instead, he tells me about his own life, growing up in Whitehall, Montana. "I was always kind of scared of my dad," he says. "He was pretty mean to us boys. I remember we'd come home from school for lunch, and my mom would drop me off at school again on the way to work. She was a waitress in a town about 50 miles away, and my dad had a shoe repair and saddle shop in town. I remember from about 8 or 9 years old, I would beg her not to go to work every day, 'cause I was terrified of being at home alone with my dad for the four or five hours after school, before she'd get home. I feel terrible for her now, 'cause every day I made her cry.

"She died of diabetes when I was 11. My dad really loved my mother, and he just didn't want to live anymore. He told us he wanted to be with her, and he started drinking. He moved us to Ennis, Montana. We ended up on a little ranch where my dad was putting up hay for a fellow, and he really started getting rough on us boys. He would drink and rant at us and keep us up all night and make us listen to him, and then send us to school on a half hour's sleep. Some nights he'd knock the hell out of you and some nights he'd just holler at you all night long, and you'd about rather get beat up and go to bed and get some sleep than listen to him all night.

"I remember one night, he got to chasing us around the house. There was sort of a little island in the middle of the house, so you could kind of work in a circle when he was real drunk, and stay ahead of him. I was in the lead and my older brother Smokie was right behind me, and just as my brother came around a corner in the kitchen he jerked a drawer open and grabbed a knife. And I told him real quietly, 'Put it back!' And he did. If my dad saw it, Smokie would've had to use it. It was one of those moments that define a person's life.

Gently nudging a horse with a cloth flag helps the animal accept distractions.

"The fellow who really saved us was a deputy sheriff of Madison County, Johnny France. A teacher of ours tipped him off, and he was the only one of the law enforcement people who had the guts to take us out of there. He arranged for a place for us to live, with the people who had raised him, in the same kind of a deal."

When I talk to Johnny France later, he recalls that the couple, Forrest and Betsy Shirley in Norris, Montana, had taken him in from a broken home and encouraged him to finish high school. After graduation, he'd told them he didn't know how he could repay them, and Betsy had said, "Some day, when you run across a similar situation, if you do for another child what we did for you, we'd consider that payment."

Buck still remembers how comfortable he felt with Betsy Shirley that first night. "It was the first time in a long while I knew I was going to get to sleep." But Forrest was out of town and due back the next day, and Buck was worried: maybe he didn't like kids! "I happened to be standing in the yard when he showed up," Buck recalls, "and he got out of the truck, walked over to me and said, 'You must be Buck,' and I just kind of nodded my head, and he said, 'Well, I'm Forrest,' and he handed me a brand-new pair of leather gloves, real nice deerskin gloves for work, and he said, 'Get in.' And we got in the ranch truck, which always had fencing material in it, and he never said a word. We went out for hours that day, and just fixed fence, stretched wire, put in posts. He didn't say anything to me, and I was so happy that he didn't. I never realized at that age how wise he was, but I'm sure Forrest had put quite a bit of thought into that. I think he figured, just get him busy doing something and let him alone. We spent quite a few days together before he said much to me at all. And finally, about the time I was thinking, 'I wish he'd talk to me a little bit,' he did just that. At that point, that's where his influence really began with me. He was a good old cowboy."

While in high school, Buck learned to ride colts with Forrest at the ranch, tried his hand as a saddle bronc rider at local rodeos and took jobs starting colts for neighboring ranches to make some money. "I got tough horses to ride," he says. "What else are you going to give a 14-year-old kid you don't know anything about? If I wrecked the horse, they'd just send it to the sale ring. It wasn't pretty, but I could get it done after a fashion."

After high school, Buck went to work for the Madison River Cattle Company near Three Forks, Montana.

He also got serious about trick roping, a skill his father had forced upon him from the age of 3, and eventually set a world's record for jumping through the smallest "butterfly" loop, with a perimeter of just over nine feet.

When he first asked for a job at Madison River, Buck was sent into Bozeman to see the manager of the ranch, who was at a Ray Hunt clinic. "I'd heard about this Ray Hunt in high school," Buck laughs, "but I was a cocky teenager and said I don't need any of that! It's just a bunch of BS!" But when he got to the clinic, he was so amazed by what he saw that he forgot to ask for the job that day. When he did get hired, the manager began sending Buck and other hands to more of Hunt's clinics, each time with a trailer load of young broncs, and Hunt would start the horses and try to educate the cowboys.

Buck had a lot to learn. "In those days when I'd start a horse," he recalls, "I was so afraid I couldn't get him saddled that I'd tie up a hind foot, tie him to the fence, and if that didn't work, I'd tie up a front foot along with it. Well, eventually I got the saddle on. But Ray made a horse feel comfortable about being worked with and saddled!"

The young cowboy was a convert. For Buck, as much as the horses, Ray Hunt was offering a different way of life. "The ranch boss saw what a passion I had for becoming a good hand," Buck says, "so he gave me the nod, and sent me to clinics to ride with Ray over the next five years."

One epigram Buck will never forget is: "You're not working on the horse, you're working on yourself."

Ray Hunt's approach with horses was remarkably like Forrest Shirley's with Buck in their first few days together. Where Forrest hadn't said much until Buck was really wishing he would, Ray Hunt didn't try to make a horse do anything; he "set it up for the horse," explains Buck, and made it easy for the horse to find out what he wanted. "Ray was teaching us to let the horse figure it out," Buck says, "to let it be the horse's idea." This meant communicating with the horse, not overpowering it.

"Tom and Ray both speak of feel, timing and balance, and *that one other thing*," Buck says. There's a Zenlike indirectness in their teachings, leaving the essence of training up to the horse.

Ray Hunt and his wife, Carolyn, soon became like family to Buck. He was learning about more than horses. Like a Zen master, Hunt offers up his wisdom in epigrams that people remember for a lifetime. One Buck will never forget is: "You're not working on the horse, you're working on yourself." His foster mother, Betsy, remembers Buck's temper as a boy, recalling times he was grounded because he beat the cow when something went wrong as he milked it. And Buck remembers the day he realized that Ray Hunt knew of his temper. It was a turning point in his life. "I so wanted him to appreciate me and I thought I'd fooled him, but he knew," Buck recalls, "and I made a commitment to work on my temper, every day of my life if that's what it took."

It was a turning point with the horses, too. "The horse is so intimidated by someone who's angry," Buck explains. "Some horses are so sensitive

Brannaman loops a line around a horse's hind leg in order to teach the animal to yield to the tension of a rope.

Brannaman displays the trick-rope skills that won him fame as a rodeo performer.

that if they find out you have this warlike part of your psyche, you might never get anything accomplished."

As he made Ray Hunt's methods his own, Buck's relationship with horses became more than a meeting of minds, it became an affair of the heart. And like all such affairs, it had its painful moments. One of these left an indelible impression. He had moved to a ranch near Bozeman, enrolled in college and worked on the ranch after classes. In addition to Buck, who rode other people's colts, the owner had hired trainers for his own horses, and the trainers had their own ideas. Their way was to force a halter on a colt in a stall, lead it around with its mare until the pair got close to a fence, then tie the colt to the fence and lead the mare away. "And these babies," Buck recalls, "having never worn a halter before, would pull back and thrash around and slam their head into the fence and throw themselves upside down. It was horrible."

"I came back from classes one afternoon," he recalls, "and there was a weanling filly they'd tied up to the fence. They were beating her, to make her get up. She didn't understand how to give to the pressure of the rope, so she'd thrash around and get up and throw herself back down again. They were taking the snap on the end of the rope and hitting her with it, in the head. These guys had been making fun of me because of my Ray Hunt stuff, even after I bailed them out a few times. So I just stood back and stayed out of it at first. One fellow went into the barn and got a bucket of water, and he poured water down the filly's ears. And of course that drove her insane. She jumped up right away, for a moment, and as soon as she felt the halter rope come tight she threw herself again, and squealed. If you've ever heard the sound a young horse makes just before it dies, that's what she sounded like.

"But they thought," Buck continues, "they'd done so well there with the water because they did get her up, that the next thing you know this fellow was dragging the hose out of the stall barn. Evidently he was going to run more water down her ears: at that point, I took over. I walked up and unsnapped this filly from the fence and snapped in a lead shank. It didn't take me but just a few seconds to get her up, and within five minutes I had her leading all over with no conflict whatsoever. I handed the lead rope to my boss, and he didn't so much as look ashamed. So I walked to the house and packed my bags and I was gone, in search of someone who I wanted to be around."

Not long afterward, Buck rented an arena and started giving his first clinics. He was in his third year of college, majoring in accounting, when his adviser, after hearing local people talk about what he was doing with horses, called Buck into his office. "I was at the top of my class," Buck laughs, "but he told me the best thing I could do was to dump my book bag into the garbage can and pursue my horse career! And I did just that."

The idea of starting horses gently isn't new. Teddy Roosevelt actually bucked convention and adopted the practice on his own ranch, and Will James, a popular author of the 1920s and '30s, described the rare cowboy who used a gentle touch, and "started" horses instead of breaking them. What is new is the idea of the horse as an intelligent individual who has more to teach us than we imagine. This is an idea handed down from Tom Dorrance to Ray Hunt and Buck Brannaman, and to the thousands of students who have been to their clinics.

There is a growing interest in more humane ways of working with horses. The field is producing a bumper crop of instructors, clinics, magazines, videos and books, including a controversial best-seller by another horse trainer,

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Monty Roberts. With the huge success of Nicholas Evans' novel, *The Horse Whisperer*, and the arrival of Redford's movie version, the field is expanding like a prairie fire. Some of what's offered is gentler than the old ways, but still far from what Buck and his teachers have in mind.

When Buck agreed to work on the *Horse Whisperer* movie with Redford, he had mixed feelings about the publicity it would produce. "There's a horse whisperer behind every bush these days," he laughs. As for himself, he adds, "I don't think of myself as a horse whisperer. I never heard of a horse whisperer until Nick Evans wrote about it. If you want to give me a label, just call me a cowboy and leave it at that."

At the same time, he's seen so much abuse of horses that he thinks the movie offers a real moment of hope. "Most people don't want to be mean to horses or abuse them," he says. "Sometimes it happens as a result of ignorance. In my entire life of working my tail off, I could never reach as many people with this message as this movie will, with its vast exposure. There's a possibility for it to change horsemanship in a positive way, on a huge scale."

When Nicholas Evans was planning his novel, he heard about Buck Brannaman and showed up at one of his clinics. "I realized how sincere he was," Buck says, "and I gave him quite a bit of my time over those few days. Then he went on his way. Next thing I know, he's sold about a bazillion books." When Redford decided to make the movie, both directing it and starring as Tom Booker, a Montana cowboy who heals a fear-crazed horse along with the mother and daughter who bring it to him, Buck was a natural choice as the film's technical adviser. But what happened on the set was more than technical.

On the set of *The Horse Whisperer*, Buck Brannaman and Robert Redford head out on horseback together.

"In the beginning," Buck says, "I was a bridge between what was real and what was a movie. I think they believed that it's really just fiction, just a story that they were trying to create, through illusion or the magic of motion pictures. But there's nothing phony or made up about the horsemanship in this book. As the filming progressed through the summer, something changed. Everyone began to realize they were making a story about real life, a story that involved these matters of the heart. Even people that were grips and lighting technicians and electricians really started to take hold of what it was all about. They would see me work with some of the horses, and then see Bob Redford working with my horses, and see the human and the horse relate to each other, and they really started to understand. I was real pleased at how he could take on the role. And he didn't have me covering for him doing all the action, making him look like a horseman. He did it himself."

In the arena at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Buck is under pressure. He's had to fly in from working on the movie, and has to fly out right after his demonstration. He's got three hours to saddle and ride a colt that's never been ridden: if he gets it done there's another horse waiting. After two hours the first horse does anything Buck asks, as if they are reading each other's minds. He starts working with the second one, a dun filly that comes in bucking, its muscles rippling with fear, its feet scarcely finding the ground. As before, Buck tries to show the horse there's nothing to fear, helping her to free up her hindquarters, soften her neck, move her feet. "That's what made her buck," he says, "too afraid, too upset to move her feet." But time's short; Buck tells the crowd he's going to get on her before she's really ready, and do the rest from the saddle. She kicks up her heels when he gets the saddle on, and bucks around the corral after he cinches it up.

He gets her quiet again and climbs on, and the crowd gets to see a rare sight: Buck Brannaman riding a bucking horse. He's a good enough bronc rider to stay on, but there's a difference between this ride and the ones at the stock show rodeo the night before. Here the filly just seems to change her mind, and stops bucking. "Some people might be pretty punishing when the horse bucks," he says. "But I didn't want her to have any trouble. If you noticed, when she was bucking I was trying to pet her. There's no hard feelings."

After the demonstration, I ask Buck if he's ever met a horse he didn't like. "Not me. No," he says. "I've run across some people I don't like, but not a horse. The people I don't like are the ones who are mean to their horses, or to other people. I'm the horse's friend, so if you're mean to a horse, you're mean to my friend."

Paul Trachtman wrote most recently for SMITHSONIAN *on recycled toys. Photographer Ted Wood is based in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.*

JOHN KELLY/TOUCHSTONE PICTURES

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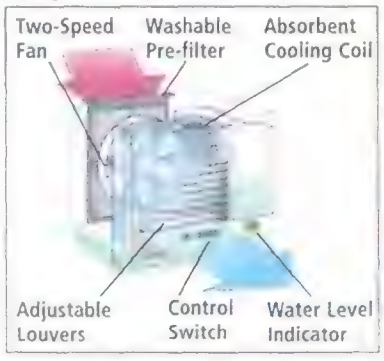

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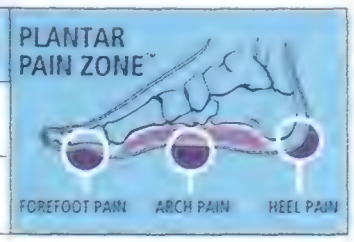

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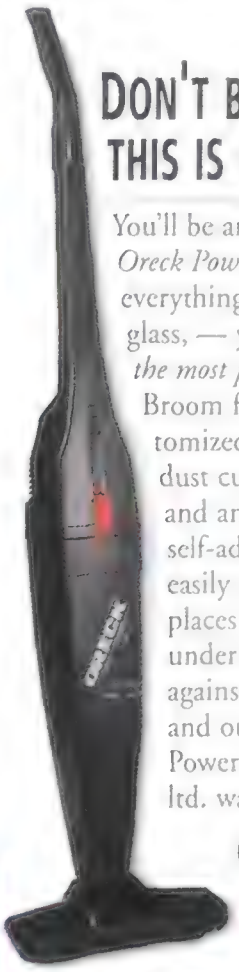

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CARICATURIST AL HIRSCHfeld created an antic three-dimensional collage to capture the Marx Brothers' exuberance in 1935. A sultry Mae West, lionized by Miguel Covarrubias, 1928, vamps with her signature suggestive swagger.

CELEBRITY CARICATURE

At the National Portrait Gallery, American Icons Revealed

ONE AFTERNOON IN 1988, Wendy Wick Reaves, curator of prints and drawings at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, was poring through aged issues of the old *Vanity Fair*. Although she was researching another subject altogether, she found herself drawn to the magazine's "lively india-ink" images of famous figures.

Thus began a decade-long foray into early 20th-century popular culture that has culminated in an exhibition, "Celebrity Caricature in America," at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery through August 23. Reaves is also the author of the accompanying book of the same title, published by Yale University Press.

The new breed of caricaturists working in America during the 1920s and '30s brought a distinctly pioneering approach to their subjects. Historically, caricature had served the purpose of social or political satire, probing the deficiencies, or corrupt depths, of a particular public personality.

The artists who lampooned Mae West, H. L. Mencken and Babe Ruth set their sights instead on America's emerging celebrity culture. The expanding mass media, fueled by the rise of radio, and including magazines such as *Vanity Fair* and the *New Yorker*, was creating this century's obsession with fame.

A generation of gifted draftsmen, from Al Hirschfeld to Miguel Covarrubias, depicting the icons of their era with wit and whimsy, focused more on star worship than on skewering. As a result, their creations were amusing and, to some extent, even affectionate. When once confronted with a Hirschfeld-generated portrayal of his persona, playwright Arthur Miller mused that the image seemed to confer "a style and a dash you were never aware of in yourself." —*Kathleen Burke*

CRITIC H. L. MENCKEN WAS the subject of a cover story for *Collier's* magazine in 1949. Legendary mayor and tireless reformer Fiorello La Guardia, depicted as New York City's reigning Napoleon, glares from the pages of a 1934 issue of *Vanity Fair*

MASTER CARICATURIST Paolo Garretto created this image of his friend, dancer Josephine Baker (far right), for *Vanity Fair*, 1935. He also produced a 1942 portrayal of muscle builder Charles Atlas for a profile in the *New Yorker*.

IN 1944, THE *AMERICAN MERcury* magazine featured Hirschfeld's take on politician Wendell Willkie (left). For the *New York World*, Garretto drafted an Art Deco-influenced visage of Babe Ruth, 1929 (above); and for *Vanity Fair*, an image of Gen. John J. Pershing, 1932.

ALL: NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SI

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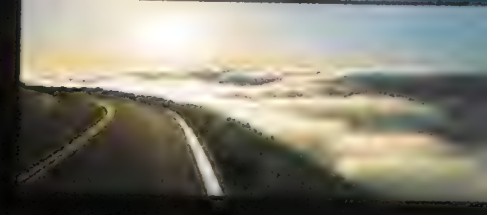

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PURSUING JUSTICE IN THE ARCTIC

BY LAWRENCE MILLMAN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GREGORY MANCHESS

IN 1911, A YOUNG MAN NAMED GEORGE STREET MADE A DECISION THAT MUST HAVE INSPIRED a good deal of tongue wagging among his mates with the New Northwest Exploration Party. "Street's crazy," you can hear them saying. "To spend two years with that Radford fellow—why, I'd rather spend three years with a bilious grizzly."

Strong, persistent, perhaps a bit stubborn, Street had proved himself an invaluable member of F. J. P. Crean's surveying party. He was a fine hand with an ax, a first-rate driver of dogs and a superb canoeist. On portages, he could carry 200 pounds, the normal tumpline load for a seasoned packer.

In 1914, Mounties set off with sled dogs to investigate a murder mystery.

But the 22-year-old Ottawan was burning to make a great trip—an expedition far to the north of the boreal areas of Alberta and Saskatchewan that he had already explored.

And now here was Radford offering him just the opportunity he was looking for. Street would join the American in one of the most ambitious Arctic expeditions ever planned; they would paddle all the way from Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories to Chesterfield Inlet on Hudson Bay, sledge north to Bathurst Inlet, continue along the Arctic Ocean to Fort McPherson on the Mackenzie Delta, and end up in the Yukon. Part of this route would take them through unexplored country; some of it might even have uncontacted Eskimos (now called Inuit).

It was an offer Street could hardly refuse, even though Radford had asked him to sign a rather unusual contract: he would protect Radford's life, if necessary, at the risk of his own; he would receive less than his share of food if food ever became scarce; and he would keep no diaries of the trip (Radford wanted exclusive rights to it himself).

Street probably identified the somewhat older man with his demanding, quick-to-anger father, and this fact may have given Radford's contract the veneer of, if not respectability, at least familiarity. Yet Street would have signed any contract, however oppressive its terms, for two years in the Arctic.

A wealthy New York sportsman and explorer, Harry Radford ("Adirondack Harry") had come north in 1909 to collect zoological specimens for the U.S. Biological Survey and the Smithsonian. From the beginning, his swagger rubbed Northerners the wrong way. In fact, it inspired a celebrated joke at his expense. In the summer of 1909, he was a passenger on an Athabasca River steamer. The steamer's captain had grown a bit weary of Radford's portrayal of himself as a Great White Hunter. One day Captain Barber suddenly pointed to a large bear on the shore. Radford stalked this bear and, upon getting close, emptied his rifle into it, only to discover it was a wooden frame dressed in an old fur coat and rigged on a rope and pulley.

Despite his success with this "bear," Radford was no more than an indifferent marksman. That he did manage to shoot a 2,402-pound wood bison, recorded as the largest ever killed, is no doubt a tribute to the inability to miss it. This trophy animal was Radford's ticket to self-proclaimed fame and may have led him to think he could make Arctic history. Actually, Radford did make Arctic history, although not in a way he could have foreseen.

"A trip of this arduous nature is simply madness for him to tackle," was the opinion of Corporal Mellor of the Mounted Police, in Fort Smith. After all, this was the same man who once claimed he could live exclusively on a diet of chocolate while traveling in the Arctic.

On June 27, 1911, Radford and Street lowered Radford's 19-foot Peterborough canoe, *Hope,* into the Slave River at Fort Smith. Paddling with the current, they reached Fort Resolution on Great Slave Lake in three and a half days. Here a nun gave Street a bottle of holy water to protect the expedition from storms. A charm to protect it from Radford's rages might have been a better idea. But there were no rages yet, except possibly toward local wildlife: by July 9, Radford had already collected 67 mammals and 22 birds for the U.S. Biological Survey.

Three weeks and 325 miles later, they reached Artillery Lake. Here they hired two Yellowknife Indians, Radford wrote, to "lighten the load of my fine cedar canoe [with their birchbark canoe] which otherwise would be in danger of swamping should high winds be met on the large lakes." So far, so good. But in mid-August, the Indians deserted. A few months later they showed up at Fort Resolution, complaining of ill-treatment. "We are not dogs to work like that," they said. Radford was a hard man, they added. A hard man who used hard words.

Due to the Indians' departure and the fact that Radford had an infected arm, Street now had to navigate their canoe single-handed, running rapids and packing their entire half-ton outfit over rough portages. They reached Chesterfield Inlet too late in the season to continue on to Bathurst Inlet, so they decided to winter with a group of Eskimos at

Ishumatok was still alive. Hulalark slit his throat so that he would not suffer. The bodies were left on the ice.

Schultz Lake. Here they arranged for lodgings in a sort of annex to the igloo of the local headman, Akulack.

Street was now in his element. He was not bothered by the cold, the caribou-stomach dinners or his hosts' kitchen hygiene (their method of washing dishes was simply to let their dogs lick them). Quite the contrary. His letters home, which he cautioned his family not to have published (the contract . . .), show his delight in the frozen world around him and his keen interest in the particulars of Eskimo life. "Children are espoused when only five or six years old, and often a boy of seven has two wives already," he wrote. And: "The reason the chief [Akulack] gave for not wanting to die was that he would not be able to eat any more."

Radford, meanwhile, was trying to locate a guide for the spring sledge trip to Bathurst Inlet. This wasn't easy, since the Eskimos in Akulack's camp considered the land north of them starvation country. At last two natives named Cockney and Boozer reluctantly agreed to make the trip. Yet when Radford refused to provide for Boozer's family in his absence, he refused to go. Whereupon Radford grabbed a rifle and threatened to shoot him if he didn't obey orders. "Go ahead and shoot," Boozer declared, and Radford backed down. An ominous moment.

At last, with Akulack himself as guide, the Radford-Street Expedition, Part II, set out for Bathurst Inlet. They made the six-week journey without incident, certainly without starvation, arriving at their destination in early May. Radford now began mapping what he called "the last strip remaining unexplored of the continental coast of North America." Soon the two explorers were encountering Copper Eskimos who had never seen a white man before. In a letter to the American Geographical Society, Radford wrote of these people: "They possess no rifles, and hunt, as of old, with the bow, spear, and harpoon. . . . They speak a dialect very different from that of the inland Eskimos and those that dwell near Hudson Bay; and Mr. Street and I find it difficult to communicate with them."

And then the two men seemed to vanish. For a year, there was no news concerning their whereabouts; no sightings and no letters back to civilization. It was as if the Arctic, an eager grave for the gallant and not-so-gallant alike, had swallowed them up. Finally, on June 11, 1913, Akulack appeared at the Hudson Bay Company trading post in Chesterfield Inlet. The story he told H. H. Hall, the post's manager, slowly made its way southward, until most of Canada knew that Harry Radford and George Street had been murdered by the Bathurst Inlet Eskimos.

Within several months, Canada's government authorized an expenditure of $70,656 for a special police patrol to investigate Akulack's story. This was a huge sum of money, especially for murders that, according to Akulack (although he had not witnessed them), had been provoked. But the issue

at stake was not just murder. If the police could track down the Eskimos responsible for these killings, then the country's control over its own central Arctic coast—an area virtually off the map—would be more or less established.

On July 31, 1914, Inspector W. J. Beyts of the Royal North West Mounted Police, along with Sgt. Maj. Thomas Caulkin and two or three constables, sailed from Halifax, Nova Scotia, in the steamer *Village Belle*. It was a miserable trip, beset by storms and icebergs. The *Village Belle* barely escaped shipwreck half a dozen times. Beyts' party reached Chesterfield Inlet too late in the season to do anything more than erect a shelter for the winter. Later they forged inland to Baker Lake.

They raised their hands high above their heads, a friendly greeting among Eskimos.

For two years, the Mounties battled the unfriendly Arctic in an effort to reach Bathurst Inlet. Their oil stove wouldn't work; their lanterns broke; their tent caught fire; incessant storms battered them; and their hungry dogs devoured 14 sets of harness. It was no consolation that the local Eskimos were in even worse shape, having lost almost all their dogs to starvation. "In one instance," reported Beyts, "I saw a party moving camp with one dog, two women, and a native hitched to the sledge."

Beyts' difficulties left him exhausted, and in September of 1916 his superiors in Ottawa relieved him of his command. Mounties, at least in literature, always "got their man." All Beyts had gotten for his efforts were pleurisy and bronchitis, from which he never really recovered.

Beyts' replacement, Inspector Francis H. French, looked the perfect model of a Mountie—he was 32 years old, handsome, generously mustached, and athletic. He was also a nephew of the Mounted Police's first commissioner, George French, and the son of Capt. John French, who'd helped put down the 1885 Northwest Rebellion—a good pedigree for leading what was now being called the Bathurst Inlet Patrol.

On March 21, 1917, Inspector French, Caulkin, several Eskimo dog handlers and interpreters, and an Eskimo woman named Solomon pushed westward from the police detachment at Baker Lake. This was the start of a trip that would have confounded even their wildest nightmares.

The misfortune that had dogged Beyts soon began to dog the new patrol. First, a pack of wolves attacked their camp. Then they were stormbound for a week. Later the dazzle of the sun made the entire party snow-blind. But French and Caulkin were blind in another sense, too—their maps were inaccurate, and on April 10 the only one of their Eskimos familiar with the route decided to go home. They were now traveling without a guide through virtually unknown country. Their compass was no help; the magnetic pole caused its needle to gyrate uselessly.

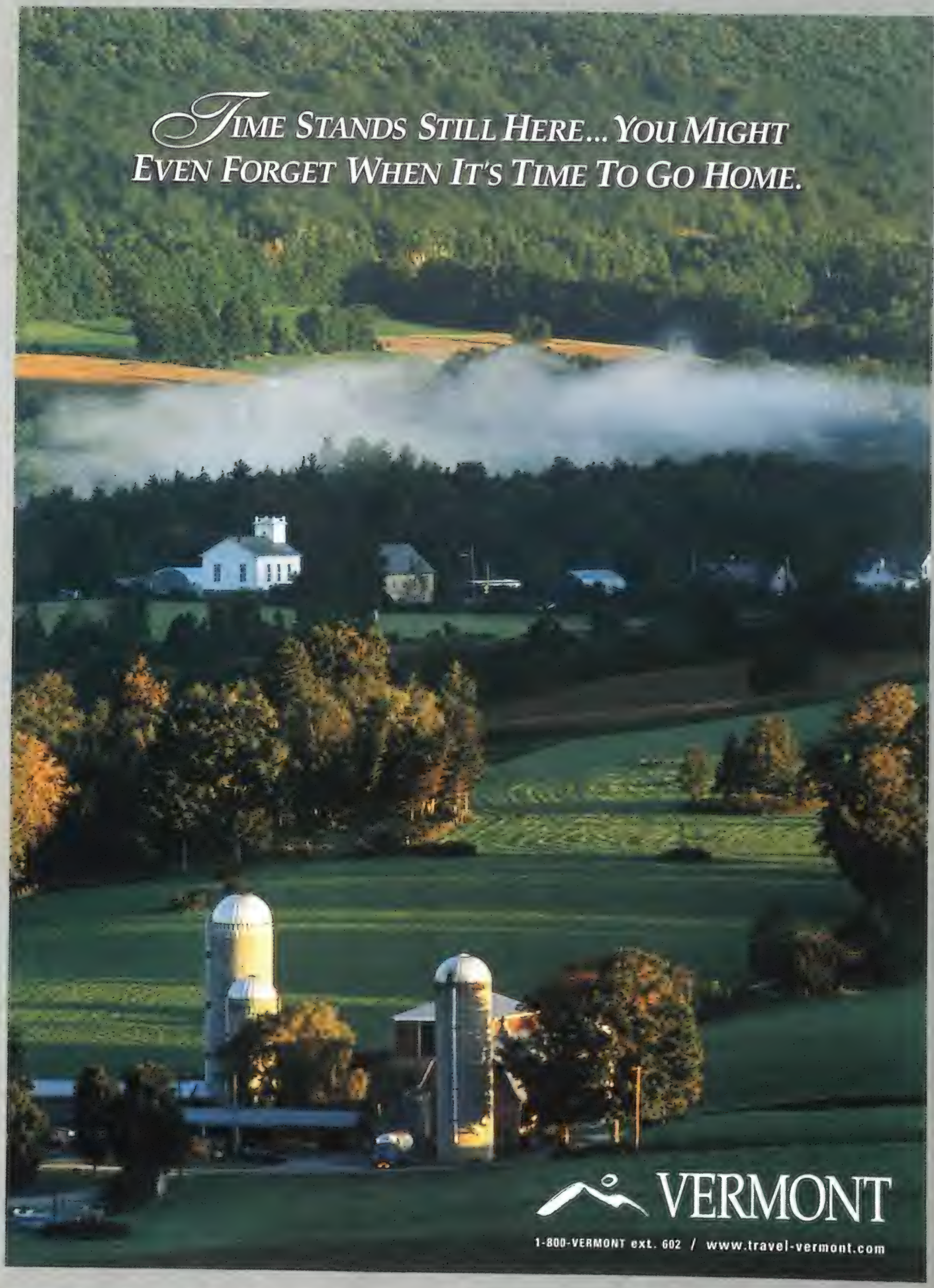
And there was more. For several days, they sledged around in dense fog trying to locate the outlet to the Back River. Because of melting snow, they were now forced to follow tortuous courses along the still snowed-in bottoms of ravines. Luckily, they met an Eskimo named Angingat who, for a rifle and ammunition, agreed to take them to the coast on a considerably less arduous route. Unluckily, the ice on this route made their dogs lame; Solomon had to sew *kammak* (boots) not only for the patrol's human members but for its canine members, too.

On May 7, with a northwest blizzard blowing and the temperature at 35 below zero, Inspector French made a significant entry in his diary: "Came within sight of Arctic Ocean at east side of Kent Peninsula at 6:30 P.M. and camped." Then he added, almost as an aside, "Living on deer [caribou] meat straight. All civilized grub gone. Oil out." Raw meat, which the Eskimos could handle, made both French and Caulkin sick.

On May 10, another storm struck and kept the patrol igloo-bound. A day later, the same storm came back and halted their progress again. Then they noticed a good sign—fresh sled tracks. They followed these tracks in a southwesterly direction and at last came to a Copper Eskimo camp at the mouth of Bathurst Inlet. It was now three years since Beyts had sailed from Halifax and nearly five years since the murders were committed.

There were only women in the camp when the patrol arrived. They fled immediately to their igloos, which isn't surprising. French and Caulkin may have been the first *qablunaat* (white men) they'd ever seen. At most, they would have seen only three others—the English adventurer David Hanbury, Radford and Street. And their experience of the latter two would not have been a pleasant one.

The women reappeared when members of the patrol raised their hands high above their heads, the traditional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friendly greeting among Eskimos. Their men were seal hunting a short distance away. Upon seeing the strangers, they dashed toward them with their spears and snow knives in menacing attitudes. French and Caulkin must have wondered if they were going to end up like Radford and Street. They needn't have worried. The men put down their weapons the moment they saw the hands-over-head gesture. Soon another group arrived from the west side of Bathurst Inlet. French found the Eskimos in this new group quite amiable. They even supplied him with *qulliit* (soapstone lamps) and bladders of seal oil, for which he must have been grateful, since he now could cook his meat. Unfortunately, this method of cooking was so slow that he had to abandon it after what he describes as an "all-night vigil."

But French had more important things to do than eat a hot meal. He began traveling up and down Bathurst Inlet, asking about the deaths of the two qablunaat. In the end, he took down sworn depositions from 11 men and one woman, most of whom had been eyewitnesses to the murders. All of them told his interpreter, a native named Joe, exactly the same story: about five winters ago, the two qablunaat came to North Quadyuk Island in Bathurst Inlet. The older white man's name was Ishumatok (the man who does the thinking) because he seemed to be the leader. The other one was known as Kiuk (wood) because of his great strength. Ishumatok had such an unusually bad temper that some people thought he might be possessed by a *tuurngaq* (spirit). It was not possible to communicate with either of them except through signs.

Akulack departed, so the qablunaat needed a guide to travel west with them. Harla and Kaneak agreed to do this. Harla had already started off in his sledge when Kaneak decided not to go. His wife had fallen down on the ice and hurt herself, and he wanted to stay with her. Ishumatok got very angry at him and began talking loudly, but no one could understand him. All at once he began beating Kaneak with a dog whip. He beat him on the head and face many times. Kiuk tried to restrain Ishumatok, but could not. Then Ishumatok dragged Kaneak over to a hole in the ice, as if he was going to push him in.

Now a man named Okitok grabbed Ishumatok, and another man, Hulalark, stabbed him in the back with a snow knife. Kiuk began running toward his sled. There was no time to decide whether he was going for a rifle or just trying to get away. Okitok ran after him and held him, and Amegealnik stabbed him in the back with his snow knife. Kiuk died right away. Ishumatok was still alive. Hulalark slit his throat so that he would not suffer. The bodies were covered with caribou skins and left on the ice.

Through his interpreter, French questioned every Eskimo he met, but neither he nor Caulkin could find any flaws in this story. When he asked about Radford, his informants were unanimous in saying that Radford had treated them badly. There was even an earlier instance where he'd picked up a knife and chased a man with it. But Street, they kept saying, was an *inugiktuq*—a good man. No one had wanted harm to come to him. (Amegealnik later offered missionary W.H.B. Hoare the pick of his white-fox pelts and asked him to give them to Street's family—the only way he could think of to make amends for what he'd done.)

French shot some of his weakest dogs to feed the rest, leaving the patrol with a sense of loneliness.

Neither Amegealnik nor the other murderer, Hulalark, was in Bathurst Inlet at the time of French's visit. Apparently, both of them were still at their winter hunting ground. But it wouldn't have mattered even if they were sitting in the igloo next door, since it was obvious that they had acted in their own defense. That being the case, and since he'd been instructed to make no arrests in the event of provocation by either Radford or Street, French exonerated the two men in absentia.

Nowadays Amegealnik and Hulalark probably would be slapped with a manslaughter charge. But in French's day, Eskimos were not so much above the law as beyond it: they were considered uncivilized, often admirably so, and thus not subject to the same legal standards as

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other Canadians. This attitude, at once liberal and condescending, would change in a few years, with increased contact between whites and natives. And with that change, the Arctic would pass from Eskimo hands into the hands of the proverbial Great White Father.

Eletchak, the Eskimo shaman, informed the Mounties that he had seen a bad spirit following their sleds as they arrived at his camp.

Before he left Bathurst Inlet, French warned the Eskimos that his verdict in the Radford-Street case would be the last verdict of its kind they would ever see. If they killed or molested white men again, he said, "the culprits would be taken away and would never return." These words had a powerful effect on his listeners. For the very worst thing they could imagine, worse even than starvation, was to be somehow taken away from this austere, unforgiving land, their home.

During French's inquiry, old Eletchak, Bathurst Inlet's resident *angakkuq* (shaman), revealed that he'd seen a bad spirit following the patrol's sleds into his camp. Either this spirit went from bad to worse, or French's luck deserted him—for his trip back to civilization makes his not necessarily easy trip to Bathurst Inlet seem like a Sunday school picnic.

It was now late May. With the warmer weather, French's igloo collapsed on top of him. An amusing incident, perhaps; but it indicated melting snow, which in turn indicated an early end to sled travel. Even more worrisome, the patrol was now subsisting on half-raw caribou meat. This diet could only get worse, since they had just a few rounds of ammunition left for their rifles. Also, their tattered clothing did little to keep out the Arctic elements.

French badly needed to reprovision his patrol. From the Eskimos, he learned of a trading ship frozen in on the coast somewhere northwest of Bathurst Inlet. He decided to strike out for this ship rather than return to Baker Lake to the southeast. His superiors had already waited five years for a verdict in the Radford-Street case; he figured they could wait a while longer.

Coastal travel turned out to be a nightmare. The patrol found itself alternately sloshing through knee-high meltwater or plunging through cracks in the sea-ice. By June 8, when they reached the schooner *Teddy Bear*, they were all suffering from cold and exposure. To this can be added disappointment, for the schooner's captain was underprovisioned himself. They continued north to the Hudson Bay Company post at Bernard Harbour, only to learn that the post's manager, a Mr. Phillips, was almost out of supplies, too. No matter: the Company's supply ship was expected any day now. They waited all summer in Bernard Harbour for this ship. Due to ice conditions, it never came.

"The hardest trip I ever made," French wrote in his diary. And this was just the beginning. He still had another Arctic winter to look forward to.

French finally bought two small rifles and a handful of cartridges from Mr. Phillips, and then moved his patrol south to the mouth of the Coppermine River. Here they overhauled their outfit, dried fish and waited for a snowfall deep enough for their sleds. On October 2, French scribbled a note to "any member" of the Mounted Police or "any white man" and gave it to some Indians heading south to Great Bear Lake. This note described his proposed itinerary back through Bathurst Inlet to Baker Lake and included these words: "If we are able to kill deer, we will be able to make out all right." That "if" must have loomed large in his mind.

On October 16, the patrol returned to the coast, where the usual travails greeted them—thin ice, howling blizzards, and wet snow that soaked them through to the skin. Almost a month later, they reached Bathurst Inlet. The Eskimos were astonished to see them again, and perhaps a little worried too: Had they unwittingly made trouble for more qablunaat?

Having very little food for their overworked dogs, they set out for Baker Lake with the equivalent of a fuel tank close to empty. Wolves ("The biggest specimens of timber wolves I have ever seen," noted French) began to follow them again, seemingly aware that the patrol was on, if not its last legs, at least quite weak ones. The weather was now so calm that any sound they made carried for miles, warning potential edible animals of their presence. At one point they found and ate a batch of semi-putrid caribou carcasses.

Now, the days were getting shorter, with fewer hours for travel and hunting. Also colder: the temperature never rose higher than ten degrees below zero. Their clothing was more or less continually frozen. Likewise their boots. Likewise their bedding. Yet these skin-clad specks of humanity continued to creep over the vast spaces of the Arctic. By early December, they had almost no oil to cook with, their faces were frostbitten, their feet were numb, and their ragged clothes were as stiff as cardboard. Patches of their skin were dropping off. No doubt their fingernails were dropping off, too. And, of course, they had very little food. Anything more? Yes: they were less than halfway to Baker Lake.

On December 13, their dogs ate the last of the caribou and

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then went hungry. To have the "legs" of your expedition without food is almost as bad as going without food yourself. For if dogs don't eat, they don't move; and if they don't move, you're stuck wherever they've stopped, often a not pleasant place. On December 17, French shot five of his weakest dogs to feed the rest, and a day or so later, five more. This measure, he reported, "struck deep into all of us." The loss of these dogs doubtless left the patrol with a sense of loneliness they had not anticipated.

Wolves began to follow them again, seemingly aware that the patrol was on its last legs.

Now comes the sort of thing you might expect from an old-fashioned serial, where the hero is hanging on in desperation in one episode and rescued, albeit temporarily, in the next. The patrol's Eskimo guides had gone off hunting. And on Christmas Day, they returned to camp with two sleds piled high with musk-ox meat. Never mind Christmas dinner—now everyone, dogs included, would have something to put in their empty bellies. This, at least, was a cause for celebration.

Whatever merriment they had on Christmas quickly dissipated with the series of blinding blizzards that inaugurated the new year, 1918. Day after day, windblown snow clawed at French and his party from out of the winter's darkness, never slackening, never letting up. Running low on food again, they couldn't afford to wait out the weather, so they struck out in a storm and veered nearly 80 miles off their course. French abandoned a sled. He killed three more dogs to feed the others. A bitch had seven pups; the other dogs immediately ate them. Temperatures went from being merely punishing to downright lethal, averaging 60 degrees below zero, somewhat lower at night.

By mid-January, the Eskimos still had seen no familiar landmarks and were convinced the patrol was lost. Not only lost, but actually heading in the wrong direction. If that was the case, nothing could save them. Maybe nothing could save them anyway. They were now so weak that they could barely even talk. Their only food was a thin bouillon-powder soup—starvation cuisine.

"It looks like our last patrol," French wrote on January 20. Dutiful Mountie that he was, he must have been especially upset about the possibility that his verdict in the Radford-Street case might not survive him.

Then a miracle happened—they sighted a herd of caribou. "We shot ten after some smart manoeuvring," French wrote. Suddenly the gods seemed to be smiling on them. A few days later, they found themselves at the southwestern extremity of Baker Lake. And on January 29, 1918, at 2:30 P.M., they arrived at the Baker Lake police post, where they were greeted like men just returned from the dead. In a sense, they were.

And so it was over—the longest, most arduous manhunt

in the history of the Mounted Police, maybe in the history of any police force. The two patrols, Beyts' and French's, had taken almost as long as World War I. French himself had traveled an extraordinary 5,153 miles, most of them walking or running with his dogs through country that resisted his every step. This remarkable feat of endurance earned him the coveted Imperial Service Award from the Canadian government. It also undermined his health; in 1924, the seemingly indomitable Inspector French had to be invalided out of the Mounties.

Like Beyts, French did not "get his man." If he had, the story of the Bathurst Inlet Patrol might be as well known today as the Arctic adventures of Peary or Stefansson. But French got something perhaps better than fame—justice for a couple of Eskimos living at the end of the world.

Eighty years later, Bathurst Inlet's handful of inhabitants remain more or less traditional, although they no longer expect a hands-over-the-head greeting from visitors: a simple "hello" will do. Also, it's unlikely that they would kill a latter-day Radford if he happened to be abusive. They would just pack him onto the next twin-engine Cessna bound for Yellowknife. For they've grown accustomed to erratic behavior from qablunaat. Prospectors, the Hudson Bay Company, the inevitable missionaries, and even tourists—all have passed through this remote Arctic fastness in the wake of Inspector French.

Maybe because murder is not something to be particularly proud of, Bathurst Inlet does not exactly abound with reminders of the Radford-Street incident. Talking to local Eskimos, you would never guess that any blood other than caribou blood had been spilled in their domain. Nor is there anything on North Quadyuk Island to indicate that this narrow pyramidal strip of land once played host to a pair of murders; no monument, no memorial cairn and certainly no grave markers. Indeed, the only place in Bathurst Inlet where there's any record of the murders is South Quadyuk Island. There, securely pegged into a diabase cliff overlooking the sea, is a simple bronze plaque installed by Street's family that reads as follows:

IN MEMORY OF
THOMAS GEORGE STREET
OF OTTAWA
AGE 23 YEARS
WHO DIED GOING TO
THE AID OF HIS FRIEND
JULY 12, 1912

Very nice. Too nice, in fact. Did Street die going to Radford's aid, as his contract required? Perhaps he was going for his gun. But he died running in the opposite direction from the man who, in all but physical deed, plunged the fatal knife into his back.

The author has made 25 trips to the Arctic. His most recent book, An Evening among Headhunters & Other Reports from Roads Less Traveled, is due out this month. Illustrator Gregory Manchess recently won a Gold Medal from the Society of Illustrators for his first children's book.

A Pastoral Preserve FACES THE FUTURE

BY CHRIS GRANSTROM

AT VERMONT'S SHELBURNE FARMS, A 19TH-CENTURY SHOWPLACE FULFILLS A QUEST TO TEACH LOVE FOR THE LAND

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GAIL MOONEY

ABOUT 20 YEARS AGO, I WAS INVITED TO AN OUTDOOR CONCERT at a place called Shelburne Farms in Shelburne, Vermont. I had heard of the place, but only vaguely. The concert was performed on the kind of high-summer evening that makes the Vermont countryside look especially comely. But when we turned in through the stone gates, I could see that we were entering a realm that was beyond pretty: "otherworldly" might be the term. A gravel drive curved in wide sweeps through a manicured landscape. Meadows stretched to wooded ridgelines. Clusters of venerable oaks cast long shadows across the sward. Then we came around a bend in the road, and I saw my first Shelburne Farms building.

I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I blinked, looked away, looked back. It was still there. It looked something like a castle: a central tower rose five stories. Turrets with conical roofs marked the forward corners of a courtyard. The roof was a miniature mountain range. Some of the gables were half-timbered and painted green. A foundation of red quartzite held the whole thing up. It's a barn, someone

Extravagantly turreted and gabled, the massive Farm Barn (above, center) is the grandest—and most fanciful—barn in America.

told me, the Farm Barn, as it's known, to distinguish it from several other magnificent barns on this property.

I've always liked barns, and I craned my neck until the Farm Barn went out of sight. We drove for another mile and a half through this countryside till we fetched up by a house on the shore of Lake Champlain. The house had 13 chimneys. Early concertgoers strolled the grounds. The orchestra tuned up their fiddles on the south porch. I walked around the house and pressed my nose against a window. I saw expanses of dark polished wood, floor-to-ceiling bookcases, walk-in fireplaces. Lamps cast circles of demure light. I turned around; the sun was slipping behind the ridge of the Adirondack Mountains across Lake Champlain. Strains of Mozart drifted across the lawns.

The Vermonters of yore—thrifty, small-scale farmers always getting ready for winter—seemed far, far away. I found out later that 32 Vermont farmers had, in fact, sold their farms back in the 1880s and '90s to the creators of Shelburne Farms. I imagine they must have been awed to see what these people of enormous imagination, and enormous fortune, could do with their properties. Dr. W. Seward Webb and his heiress wife, Eliza Vanderbilt Webb (known to her friends as Lila), brought Shelburne Farms to life in a blaze of glory, but the flames died down very quickly. By the first years of the new century, even as the last of the great barns was still being built, the glory days were ending. Decades of slow decline followed, when Shelburne Farms sank into obscurity—but survived.

Over the past 25 or so years, Shelburne Farms has been rejuvenated, though its new life is quite different from what the founders had in mind. Some of Seward and Lila Webb's great-grandchildren—who gave up their claims to the property to save it from the auction block—have converted Shelburne Farms into a nonprofit institution. Today's Shelburne enterprises include the unlikely amalgam of a dairy farm, a cheese making operation, an inn and restaurant (at the manor house where I attended the concert), a nature park, a woodlot forest, a visitors' center and, at the heart of the mission, an agricultural and environmental education center, aimed mostly at children.

How did this combination come about? The dairy farm has always been there; it's a constant in the history of the estate. The cheddar cheese is a "value-added" way to sell Shelburne Farms milk, and spread the name. Shelburne House was the largest house in Vermont; its transformation to an inn and restaurant has made it a significant source of Shelburne Farms' revenue. The nature park, the forest and the visitors' center are there because the magnificent landscape is still there. The environmental education programs are really the whole point; they are the culmination of the

Rambling Shelburne House today (above) is a palatial inn; its tearoom (above, right) contains furniture originally collected by the Webbs. The couple—Seward, in a rocker, and Lila, in white, seated at his side—is shown at home in Vermont in 1886.

ideas the Webb descendants had when they worked to save Shelburne Farms in the first place.

Seward Webb married Eliza Vanderbilt in 1881 at a wedding in New York City attended by the cream of New York society. The guests included former President Ulysses S. Grant and his wife. (It could be pointed out that, in 1881, the Vanderbilts' fortune was still considered "new money," compared, say, with the Astors', which was securely "old.") Seward Webb had been trained as a physician, but gave up medicine and eventually became president of one of his father-in-law's railroad businesses. In the early 1880s, the Webbs made several trips to Vermont and, apparently, were smitten by the beauty of the state and decided to move to Burlington. Then, in 1885, Lila's father, William Henry Vanderbilt, died. Lila's $10 million inheritance made the Webbs one of the wealthiest couples in America. Seward Webb didn't hesitate to start spending the fortune. The Webbs bought up farms near Shelburne (just south of Burlington) until their property covered about 3,800 acres, roughly six square miles of the Lake Champlain valley.

Through the late 1880s and early 1890s, in a torrential outpouring of money, energy and creative design, Shelburne Farms was created. An army of workers pulled down existing houses, barns and fences. Fields and forests were laid out in a plan, sketched out by Frederick Law Olmsted, that incorporated aesthetic principles as much as agricultural necessities. The workers crushed stone in the farm's quarry, strung telephone lines, laid drainage pipes. They planted forests; in some years, tens of thousands of tree seedlings went in the ground. They built waterworks, docks and greenhouses. There was a greenhouse for roses, another for grapes, and yet another for palm trees. A New York architect, Robert Henderson Robertson, drew up plans for the buildings. A house was built on a point jutting into Lake Champlain, then enlarged and enlarged again. But looming over it all were the barns. Seward Webb built the grandest, most fanciful barns on American soil.

The Webbs weren't the only ones creating grand estates. It was the height of the Gilded Age; immense fortunes had been accumulated (by a few); and a fervor to build bigger and bigger houses seems to have caught hold of these newly rich. The eight surviving children of William Henry Vanderbilt led the way; surely no single set of siblings has ever been responsible for so much fabulous domestic architecture. They built mansions on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, in the New York suburbs and in Newport, Rhode Island. The largest house of all was Biltmore in Asheville, North Carolina, commissioned by Lila Webb's brother George Vanderbilt (SMITHSONIAN, September 1992).

And the Webbs were by no means the only ones in their social milieu to discover an interest in things agricul-

Summertime concerts continue a tradition that was established in 1976; here, music lovers gather on the south lawn at Shelburne House for a performance.

tural. Many of the newly created country estates included a "model farm" where "scientific agriculture" could be demonstrated. Books and magazines were published instructing urban folks in the fine points of farming. Breeding stock was exchanged among such "farmers" as Webb, Henry Fairfax, Pierre Lorillard, John Jacob Astor and George Vanderbilt.

But, in Seward Webb's mind, Shelburne Farms wasn't just a showplace. He had convinced himself that he could make money there. His grand scheme was to introduce a new breed of horse—an American version of the English hackney combined with the Vermont draft horse—that would be both a carriage horse and a workhorse. This project proved ill-considered and short-lived. But, like everything else at Shelburne Farms, it sprang to life as if money were no object—and it wasn't.

The Breeding Barn was erected to house this horse-breeding venture. It was an edifice so huge that polo could be played there indoors. When completed in 1891, it enclosed the largest clear-span interior space in America.

In 1998 the Breeding Barn is still there. It is gray and weathered, but so big that the sight of it can slacken your jaw muscles. I got a tour of the building, led by Alec Webb, great-grandson of Seward and Lila and the president of the "new" Shelburne Farms, and Megan Camp, its vice president. We entered through an arched doorway wide enough for the passage of a four-in-hand carriage. The Breeding Barn and 400 surrounding acres, after a complicated journey through the possession of various Webb heirs, has recently been reacquired by Shelburne Farms. A familiar question—what are we going to *do* with this building?—surfaced immediately.

It's the question that has been faced, over the past 25 years, as the time came to renovate each structure. The Breeding Barn will be restored; a new capital campaign will be launched this summer. It will be used for public gatherings. The nearby "old" dairy barn, a more modestly scaled structure, will be renovated to hold guest rooms for students, both adults and children, participating in Shelburne Farms' environmental education programs. The folks at Shelburne Farms know this route. Over the past dozen years, they have renovated Shelburne House, the Farm Barn and the Coach Barn.

As we strolled together through the barn, Alec looked up at the ingenious system of steel braces that support the roof, and wondered aloud whether they should be left as they are—slightly rusty—or should be sanded down and painted. Alec is a soft-spoken man in his mid-40s, as modest as his great-grandfather was imperious. Shelburne Farms' work is about much more than saving a Vanderbilt estate, Alec insists. It is the exceptionally beautiful landscape they are preserving. Alec lives on the farm in a very modest house that Megan teasingly calls the Parsonage. Not everyone knows that he (along with his siblings) has relinquished all claim to the ownership of Shelburne Farms.

We paused here and there in the barn—once to look at a raccoon skeleton, another time to inspect some dusty carriages that appeared to have been unmoved since the groom unhitched the horses decades ago. "Are these our carriages," Megan wondered, "or the museum's?" (She was

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referring to Shelburne Museum, a collection of folk art and architecture some miles away, that was founded by Alec's great-uncle and great-aunt J. Watson and Electra Havemeyer Webb. Shelburne Farms and the museum, despite their proximity and connection to the Webb family, are independent organizations.) "I don't think the museum wants any more carriages," Alec joked, then turned to me. "You want a carriage?"

Alec's determination to save Shelburne Farms—and his vision of how that would be accomplished—originated back in 1970, when he was still a teenager. His father, Derick Webb, had called his children together on the south porch of Shelburne House to announce that Shelburne Farms could no longer be maintained as one family's private estate. He raised the possibility of selling 500 acres of the property (at that time the estate was about 1,700 acres) to a real-estate developer. Shelburne Farms would change drastically, and Derick wanted his children's reaction. The six children, in their late teens and early 20s, were aghast. They asked their father to let them figure out a new use that would save their home. They offered to give up any claim on the property if doing so would allow it to be preserved.

The young Webbs, who had grown up in these remarkable surroundings, had developed a kind of mystical attachment to the landscape. "When you walk around here," Marshall Webb, Alec's brother and the manager of buildings, grounds and woodlands at Shelburne Farms, told me later, "whether you've been here your whole life or you're absolutely brand-new, there is a magic that is inescapable. It has to do with the past, and it has to do with what we're doing now, projecting into the future. But mostly it's just the raw energy of the land—the earth, trees, sky."

They had a notion of using the property as an environmental education center—sharing with other youngsters the rich experience that they had growing up there. A nonprofit corporation was set up, and the assets of the estate were gradually transferred to it. Some land "outside the gates" was eventually sold to settle the debts. In 1970, Alec began a summer nature camp at the farm for a handful of inner-city kids. Though it was a modest start, it set the course for the new Shelburne Farms. Money was raised; buildings were renovated. The environmental and agricultural education programs got started and earned a reputation for excellence. The atmosphere of decline disappeared.

Kids come to Shelburne Farms for outdoor field trips every day of the school year.

Today, Shelburne Farms is at its liveliest in more than a century—since the glory days when Alec and Marshall's great-grandparents held house parties and pheasant shoots for Teddy Roosevelt, Admiral Dewey, the Duke of Marlborough. Nowadays, the visitors are schoolchildren, and they show up in yellow school buses.

On a frosty March morning I stand on the edge of a grove of maple trees, waiting for one of these buses to arrive. Children come to Shelburne Farms for field trips every day of the school year; these field trips are the heart of the education program. The kids on the bus (first- and second-graders from the Mary Hogan School in Middlebury, Vermont) are coming for a hands-on lesson in maple sugaring. Last month it was winter adaptations of plants and animals. Next month it will be dairy farming.

The bus pulls up and the youngsters pile out. Charlotte Jeffreys, an apprentice teacher, leads a group over to a big maple tree that already has a bucket hanging on it. (The teaching apprentices and interns are mostly college students or recent graduates who are beginning careers in environmental education.) "We're going to tap a tree and I need some helpers," she says. "Me, me, me," comes the chorus. "This tree has already been tapped," Charlotte observes. "You need to help me find one that doesn't have a bucket." "I see one! I see one!" The kids tromp through the snow till they, and Charlotte, agree that they've found a maple tree big enough to tap. They take turns wrestling with the brace and bit, and

pounding in the tap. Other children brush the snow off a fallen log and sit down to listen to Judy Elson, director of school programs, tell a Native American legend of how the making of maple syrup was discovered.

Yet another group is learning some elements of forestry. "Where does maple sugaring start?" asks Sharon Plumb, Shelburne's director of field trips. "Trees," say the kids. "And where do trees start?" "Seeds," comes the reply. "So why do we need baby trees?" Sharon asks. The kids are getting the point. Later, down at the sugarhouse, the sap is boiling and the kids are introduced to the various tools used in the boiling-down process.

And back in the lunchroom at the Farm Barn, Charlotte asks the kids to dump food scraps in the worm-composting bin. There are lots of wriggling worms; it's one of the highlights of the day.

After the kids have left, the teachers and interns huddle for an impromptu evaluation of the morning's activities. The education staff here is continually developing new programs to fit schools' needs. In fact, the programs are so popular that teachers have to enter a lottery for the chance to bring their classes.

It's not easy to get a job here, either. Environmental education is a booming field. A job—even an internship—at Shelburne is a plum. The teachers who work here seem to love it. Linda Wellings was a teacher for 18 years before she joined the staff. "When someone asks me about my job," she says, "it's indescribable. One day I loaded pigs and took them to market, the next day I led a workshop for elementary school teachers."

Shelburne is definitely a hands-on place: the people who live or work here grow crops, milk cows, practice forestry. "We have to manage 1,400 acres of land," Megan Camp points out. "We are not only teaching, we're doing." And it's not just for show. Most of the milk from the herd of more than 200 Brown Swiss cows at the dairy farm goes into cheddar cheese. Shelburne sells 100,000 pounds of cheese a year, and the income is an important part of the $3.4 million annual budget.

I sat down with Megan one afternoon—on tiny chairs in a classroom in the Farm Barn, appropriately enough—to learn more about Shelburne's central teaching mission. Megan came here in 1982 to do research as a student in environmental education and has never left. "Agriculture education in this country in the 1970s," she explains, "was pretty much limited to vocational agriculture." One of her early goals was to get classroom teachers to include agriculture in their science curriculum. "Teachers," she says, "can make connections: science is earthworms, it's rainfall, climate, weather, how plants grow, how cows give us milk." Shelburne Farms has created an elementary agriculture-cum-environmental-science curriculum called Project Seasons and collected it in a book of the same name.

The Project Seasons program has been used by schools too far away from Shelburne to make the trip; the National Wildlife Federation has adopted it for its summer Nature Quest programs. Every summer Shelburne runs a program for teachers to learn the Project Seasons curriculum. One teacher, who read about Shelburne Farms in a soil conservation magazine, traveled all the way from Tasmania to attend the workshop.

Shelburne Farms finds itself on the itinerary when international, nonprofit conservation and sustainable development organizations go traveling—organizations from Eastern

Shelburne is a working farm, as staff and visitors will attest. Clockwise, from above left: a staffer picks strawberries; kids tap sugar maples; in the greenhouse, the herd of Brown Swiss cows is milked; a child checks out piglets at the Farm Barn.

Inside the cavernous expanse of the Breeding Barn, Marshall (left) and Alec Webb, great-grandsons of Seward and Lila, discuss restoration plans for the structure.

Europe in particular. Visitors from Russia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Macedonia, Albania and Poland have come here. Megan has given presentations in some of those countries. She was buttonholed at a meeting in Bulgaria by a woman who knew only that Megan was American. The woman pulled out a Shelburne Farms' brochure and asked Megan if she knew anything about "that model farm." When Megan told her she worked there, the woman showed her a book on sustainable development, in Bulgarian, that contained a chapter on Shelburne Farms.

But Megan cautioned me that for all this international recognition, Shelburne's first purpose is to work in the local community. Lately, Shelburne has allied itself with the Lake Champlain Science Center, and a youth center in Burlington, to get city kids interested in the natural history of the area. "The kids learn about the Lake Champlain basin," Judy Elson, who had joined us, says, "but a lot of it is learning about themselves, learning new skills." After a pause, Megan says, "It's very difficult to describe everything we do. Maybe a new word will emerge for places like Shelburne Farms."

Maybe Marshall Webb could give me the word. I climbed the curving staircase to his office high in one turret of the Farm Barn. Marshall looks a lot like his brother Alec, though he's a bit taller and more garrulous. "A number of these structures," he says, "were in an advanced state of decay. Dad was trying to save the farm, and wasn't paying attention to them." Marshall started paying attention back in his youth. When he was 21, he used his own money to hire a crew to paint Shelburne House, in an effort to try to halt deterioration. The crew discovered that it's a big house, especially when you're standing on a ladder with a paintbrush in hand. But Marshall was determined. When he ran low on funds to pay the crew, he traded his electric guitar to one painter to keep him on the job for an extra two weeks. The prime coat was as far as they got.

I asked Marshall to speculate on what had motivated his great-grandfather to build these spectacular barns. "He was creating his dream," Marshall said. "He wanted to have the grandest stud farm in the world. He wanted to make a statement." And later Marshall said, "I've only recently found out what a tragic figure he was at the end of his life."

Seward Webb became bitter that local farmers weren't interested in breeding their mares to his hackney horses. It seems that he had to satisfy himself with blue ribbons from horse shows that mostly attracted other millionaire hackney fanciers. As the *New York Sun* reported in 1902: "Dr. Webb was the first of the American millionaires to breed hackney horses. He had hoped to make money out of his business . . . but [his efforts] were not satisfactory in any marked degree." The futility of the effort seems staggering. By 1904, most of the hackney horses had been sold off.

This outcome may have staggered even Dr. Webb. He had begun to use morphine to battle migraine headaches and had become addicted to the drug. He became reclusive. The job of running the estate fell to his wife and his staff. The many photographs and portraits of Seward Webb that hang on the walls of Shelburne House show a man whose mien went from stern to severe through his lifetime. I tried to find a lighthearted note among his writings in the archives, but the best I came up with was an order to give the farm crew a half-holiday one Tuesday in the summer of 1896—so that they could attend a Republican party rally. In his declining years Webb maintained one ritual: a solitary drive over the roads of Shelburne Farms in a horse-drawn carriage every evening before dinner. He died in 1926.

Lila Webb lived another ten years. To the casual eye, life at Shelburne House through the 1920s and early '30s seemed remarkably unchanged. Walter Woodgate, the English majordomo, kept up the standards as much as possible. Infusions of cash from Lila's childless brother, Frederick Vanderbilt, helped. House parties and fancy dinners went on. But after Lila died in 1936, the house was never again used as any family's primary residence.

The Webb's youngest son, Vanderbilt, inherited Shelburne Farms, still

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nearly 2,000 acres. He was a lawyer in New York City and used Shelburne as a summer place. He kept a farm crew on who worked at various enterprises, raising cattle and sheep. In 1939, Derick Webb, Vanderbilt's son, took over as farm manager. Shelburne Farms survived as a private farm and estate until the '70s, each year looking more like an anachronism.

But it survived. Marshall believes that Shelburne Farms survived for a reason, preserved by the loving attention of the succeeding generations of the Webb family, until the time was ripe for it to reemerge with its new purpose. "Maybe the purpose of these buildings is still emerging," he says. Now, from his perch in the Farm Barn, he can see the daily traffic of school buses bringing children for field trips, guests arriving at the inn, tractors working the fields and hauling crops back to the dairy barn. "This is beyond our wildest dreams," he muses.

From his perch in the Farm Barn, Marshall Webb muses, "This is beyond our wildest dreams."

People come to Shelburne for all kinds of reasons. Families, including mine, like to visit the Children's Farmyard—a small collection of livestock, which includes Clover, a patient cow who suffers all comers to try hand milking. When my daughter was 7 she squeezed a few squirts of milk from Clover and talked about it for months afterward. Plenty of local families come for a walk and a picnic. Some people come great distances for the thrill of being amidst the lingering traces of a lost world of wealth.

For their part, the kids who come to the education programs seem immune to the glamorous history of the place. One day I watched a class of third-graders who had been studying 19th-century life (of ordinary folks, not robber barons) try their hands at everything from flailing wheat to sawing wood to shoveling out chicken pens. As the children crisscrossed the Farm Barn courtyard, I watched to see whether they noticed what an extraordinary place they were in. Nobody paid the least attention until finally one little girl looked up, and up, to the top of the clock tower. Then she asked her teacher, "Was this once a castle?"

Chris Granstrom wrote for SMITHSONIAN *on letterboxing in April. Photographer Gail Mooney is based in New Jersey.*

In the distance, deer amble across the gravel drive of the horse-chestnut allée leading into Shelburne's Edenic precincts, a landscape preserved intact for generations.

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by Judith Ross

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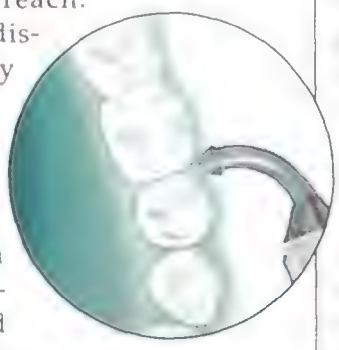

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Ursula von Rydingsvard sculpts metaphors in wood

THE CONTEMPORARY ARTIST COMBINES PRIMORDIAL FORMS AND HIGHLY EXPRESSIVE CONTENT TO PRODUCE HAUNTING AND MONUMENTAL WORKS OF UNCOMMON POWER

BY AVIS BERMAN

"THE EASIEST WAY FOR ME TO RECALL MY PAST IS to examine the spaces in which the events took place," Ursula von Rydingsvard has said, and when examination turns into concrete construction, the result is among the most profound sculpture being produced today. Of the generation that matured during the heyday of Minimalism, Conceptual Art and the site-specific object, von Rydingsvard makes massive abstract works of hacked and chiseled wood. But though she came of age in the New York art world of the 1970s, the artist was uncomfortable with what she perceived as the impersonality of the hard-edge movements then capturing the attention of the bigger galleries and museums. She chose instead to mine the deepest veins of memory for her subject matter: layers of joined wood are metaphors for accretions of primal history.

Von Rydingsvard persistently explores childhood experiences, emphasizing the quiet drama of family connections. She also chronicles the emotional attachments to one's environment and the dignity of hand labor and hand tools. Although her sculptures are nonrepresentational and avoid literalism, they function, says one critic, as "a connector between abstraction and the world of real things." Making reference to all kinds of everyday objects and architectural constructions, von Rydingsvard's work evokes barns, sheds, barracks, pews, altars, shovels, bowls and spoons—even the human body. Much of its impact derives from the authority and intensity of feeling, but each piece is enriched as well by the contrast between a monolithic scale and an intimacy of detail. This commanding fusion of austerity, spirituality and emotional force grabs you at once.

The first time I saw von Rydingsvard's sculpture in her studio, about 11 years ago, I was overwhelmed by a flood of sensations, starting with a dizzying rush from the aroma of the wood. The individual surfaces—worn, gashed, chiseled, scarred, painted and scrubbed—invited touching, even caressing. Yet the power of the spare shapes and restrained color reminded me of Kafka's pronouncement that art should be "the axe for the frozen sea in us."

Working steadily from the mid-1970s through the '80s, von Rydingsvard first started being noticed about a decade ago, yet her sculpture has never been fashionable. During her formative years, she was not invited to participate in the Whitney or Corcoran biennials, those bellwethers of trendiness that can often jump-start an artist's career. That recognition has been fairly slow in coming may be one reason why she hasn't acquired the airs of an art star. Last winter I ran into von Rydingsvard waiting in a long line to get

The densely detailed surface of a work in progress encompasses the artist and the tools she uses to wield her magic on wood.

into a show at the Whitney. As an artist whose work has been purchased by that institution, she could have swept to the front, but she didn't. She had forgotten to bring identification and didn't think anyone would know who she was.

Now, however, it would be remiss to overlook her. Von Rydingsvard, at the age of 55, seems to be at the summit of her career. Not only have the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Walker Art Center, the High Museum of Art and the Detroit Institute of Arts acquired her work, but a number of private collectors, as well as the Microsoft Corporation, have commissioned outdoor pieces.

In the summer of 1997, von Rydingsvard installed a group of outdoor works in Yorkshire Sculpture Park, in a part of England near where Henry Moore lived and worked. That exhibition, "Ursula von Rydingsvard," has now crossed the Atlantic and will be on view at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri, from May 9 through March 28, 1999; it then travels to the Indianapolis Museum of Art. Meanwhile, a show of her indoor sculpture has been organized by the Madison Art Center in Madison, Wisconsin, where it opened at the beginning of March. After closing on May 10, it continues on to the Hood Museum of Art in Hanover, New Hampshire, the Chicago Cultural Center, and the Contemporary Museum in Honolulu. Stephen Fleischman, the director of the Madison Art Center, thinks that von Rydingsvard "is one of the most significant sculptors of her generation." Similarly, Martin Friedman, director emeritus of the Walker Art Center, who has watched von Rydingsvard's work develop since the early 1980s, says, "She is in the front rank of sculptors today, bringing intense energy and gravitas to sculpture. She is also a key figure in restoring to sculpture its sense of craft. In her work, labor has been elevated to a sacred process."

A visit to von Rydingsvard's studio, in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, where she has worked since 1984, confirms Friedman's observation. The long, narrow room in which most of the construction goes on is entirely functional; the brick walls are covered with a coat of white paint and the floors are stained black, but there is no decoration. There isn't room for any, because wood is everywhere, mainly 12- to 18-foot lengths of four-by-four beams of milled cedar, the primary constituent of her sculpture. Beams are stacked on the floor and in rafters, but smaller fragments are piled in barrels and boxes. These are distinct from chiseled components to be incorporated into future sculptures—grocery bags full of rough-hewn wooden balls the size of grapefruit and flat squares of wood laid out on the floor in geometric patterns like oversize jigsaw puzzles. Hundreds of clamps and rods for gluing the cedar hang on the walls; nearby stand von Rydingsvard's upright pieces, looking much like implements borrowed from a household of domesticated giants. Again, the sweet smell of cedar is pervasive and intoxicating, but von Rydingsvard says she doesn't even notice it anymore.

Hand-e-over (1996-97), shown here at England's Yorkshire Sculpture Park, was inspired by a Midwestern children's game.

Today, on a foggy morning in early January, the artist and two of her assistants, sculptors Mark Shunney and Chris Romer (longtime head assistant, Polish-born Bart Karski, is away on vacation), are working on a piece that resembles six waist-high ice-cream cones. Arranged in two rows of three, the cones are joined together at the top; a third row of three cones is to be added. A tall, broad-shouldered woman with short brown hair and brown eyes, von Rydingsvard is dressed in a black sweatshirt, jeans and work boots. Her hands are large and capable-looking, with long square fingers. She straps on kneepads, and looks for some goggles and a face mask.

Von Rydingsvard builds her sculpture from the ground up, board by board, cut by cut, deciding as she goes along. She begins with "an image that I get in my head," which she can neither describe nor draw. Instead, she kneels on the floor and scratches out three chalk circles, each one indicating where a new cone will be assembled, and asks Romer to pass her a cedar beam. She lays it over the three circles and, by eye, decides how big the piece should be. She then sketches curved lines on the wood in pencil, and carries the beam to the other end of the loft, which is filled with power tools and vented by two industrial-strength exhaust fans. She puts on the goggles and mask, and grabs a circular saw, cutting the beam into three smaller pieces according to her pencil lines, then hacking at the ends irregularly to give the edges interest. She and the assistants tend to save time by not carrying the cut wood back to the fabrication area. Instead, they toss it across the room. The sculptor Judy Pfaff, who worked in the studio below von Rydingsvard's for years, could hear the floor rumble from the whir of the saw and the impact of the wood landing after it was lobbed. "When Ursula was on a roll building something," Pfaff recalls, "I knew it down here. I felt like I was in the middle of a timpani drum."

The cut pieces have to be matched to the original positions in which they were laid out. To keep things straight, each piece of wood is given a code number. Romer hands von Rydingsvard another beam; she stares at it and makes some more pencil marks. These lines are simple, straightforward diagonals, so she lets Shunney, who has worked for her for more than two years, cut them. He picks up the saw and grinds away, booting three cut pieces back to the other two. Von Rydingsvard stacks the pieces of wood on top of the first pile, now about five pieces wide. She asks Romer for another beam, stoops down and draws some more lines. Each layer of each cone requires about five cut pieces, and each cone is going to have at least 30 layers. The positioning is crucial from the outset. "The bottom is important," the artist points out. "Some of the pieces will dramatically move away from each other. That initiates the mood of the piece."

The cutting, stacking, marking, lifting, kneeling, bending and carrying go on for several hours until everyone breaks, about noon, for turkey and stuffing that von Rydingsvard has brought from home. When work is resumed, no one says much: the major sounds are the whine of the saw, the roar of the fans and the crack of the cedar hitting the floor. "This part, the cutting and the building," von Rydingsvard says, "is the glory of my life, because this is where all the decisions get made."

After a sculpture is entirely cut and shaped, the assistants make sure that every bit of wood is coded. Next they clamp and glue the pieces of wood together, one layer at a time. When the piece is reassembled, von Rydingsvard rubs the red surface of the cedar with a grayish-black graphite. The variations of shadow and light made by the color imbue the wood with a greater resonance. To attain this patina, she sprays the work with an alcohol-based adhesive before brushing on the powdered graphite. The piece is then scrubbed with a steel scouring pad, both to remove excess powder and to push some of the pigment under the skin of the wood. All of these processes have the effect, in the words of the critic David Levi Strauss, of "adding up to a wearing down."

Ursula Karoliszyn was born on July 26, 1942, in Deensen, Germany. She was one of three daughters and four sons born to Ignacy and Kunegunda Karoliszyn, a Ukrainian farmer and his Polish wife, who had lived in rural Poland until they were removed to a slave labor camp and forced

to work for the Nazis. After World War II ended, the family was shuttled from one refugee camp to the next, and from these years as a displaced person in an occupied country, von Rydingsvard would draw the primary imagery for her art. Given her history, von Rydingsvard has earned the right to an art unsparing in its expression of trauma, an art that bluntly exposes raw nerves, but she refuses such emotionalism and abhors the notion of herself as a victim. "One of the things I would be most ashamed of is to have any pathos in my work. Or to have blatant pain, like the kind that Francis Bacon puts in his painting. I want this kind of packed pride, this containment of emotions—like Giotto." Accordingly, von Rydingsvard's sculptures, while brooding and somber, are oddly domestic and comforting—haunting rather than despairing, stoic rather than sentimental. And when she speaks about how she scores and batters her wood, her language is homely. She compares a jutting wood protuberance to an "apron" and calls a chopped, pitted interior "lacework." A work in progress reminds her of a waffle iron. Her constructions enclose space, and so render a hostile world inhabitable, just as the desolate and often menacing refugee camps also represented protective shelters in which her family survived as a unit. These associations inform *Untitled (Felt Box)*, a bathtub-size rectangle of cedar, graphite and gray felt that she created in 1986. The work's compactness and its tightly layered materials convey the idea of a sanctuary and a bulwark. "The relationship of the felt and the wood has to do with the army blankets we were given in the camps," von Rydingsvard says. "They were very warm and durable. We lived in wooden barracks made by the soldiers, and we would hang the blankets up against the walls for insulation. We would put the blankets against the raw wood, so for me there's a wonderful connection between the two materials."

The stark profile of the 1991 wall sculpture *Johnny Angel* casts patterned shadows.

In 1950 the Karoliszyns immigrated to the United States and, in January 1951, settled in Plainville, Connecticut, a small town in the central part of the state. The arrival of the new family was so exotic that the event rated a front-page article in the local newspaper, precipitating an outpouring of generosity. "This family that knew no English, that had so many children, won the sympathies of the town," von Rydingsvard remembers. "The day after the article was printed, there were boxes of clothing and pieces of furniture that were put on our front porch without our knowing where they came from. We couldn't believe our good fortune. We opened up a box with 30 ties in it—we had never seen 30 ties in our entire lives. Plainville was a town with riches beyond anything we had imagined."

Nevertheless, adjustment was difficult. Ursula was "an excruciatingly shy" child, and both parents were constantly engaged in making a living. Kunegunda worked 12 hours a day, six days a week as a baker, and Ignacy held down two factory jobs during the week and worked as a gardener on weekends. Ursula was left in charge of the housekeeping, cooking and interpreting. "I recall signing my father's checks to deposit them in the bank, and getting caught when I was in the fourth grade," she says. Von Rydingsvard laughs about this incident now, but the child did not find it very funny.

Entering school shortly after moving to Plainville, Ursula wore the same outfit every day—a top and a pair of gray felt pants made out of the army blankets the family had brought with them from Europe. On Valentine's Day, her teacher surprised the little girl with a red-and-white velvet-and-lace dress. "I opened up the package and I thought it was just the most magnificent thing," the artist says, her voice soft with wonder, "but I couldn't associate myself with it. I have no recollection of what happened to that dress, but I know I never wore it. It would have been such a dramatic change from this gray felt outfit I was wearing to these very feminine clothes, but the fantasies it evoked were marvelous." To this day, von Rydingsvard habitually wears blacks and grays. "It sounds so nostalgically stupid, but there are things I do that unconsciously connect me with the environment I had a long time ago," she says. "The camps had everything to do with

Built in 1994 for the roof of the Denver Art Museum, *Slepa Gienia (Blind Eugenie)*, top, is composed of a rhythmic series of boatlike structures reminiscent of ancient vessels. *Ocean Floor* (1996), above, combines cedar and pendant pods of cow intestines.

black and white and gray." The neutral, no-color outfits have become part of an armor of stability that she first created to enable her to exist in the world, but now they have evolved into an aspect of her work.

In 1960, von Rydingsvard enrolled in the University of New Hampshire as a painter, and then transferred to the University of Miami at Coral Gables to marry Milton von Rydingsvard, a premed student whom she had met in Plainville. After earning her B.A. and M.A. in Florida, she taught art at a local high school, and in 1969 their daughter, Ursula Ann, who is now a producer for CNN, was born. The Rydingsvards ended up back in Connecticut, but separated in 1971. Ursula continued to teach school, but she wanted to become a serious artist and started putting away money toward more advanced education.

In 1973 the couple divorced, and Ursula moved to New York with her daughter to enter the MFA program at Columbia University. She had saved $4,600 from teaching, which she hoped to make last two years. "Finances were an issue in the extreme," she says. "I paid $190 a month for rent to Columbia, and had an additional $40 to spend for the rest of the month. I had to focus on that to an unbelievable extent, or I wouldn't have been able to survive. We never had candy. I never took a subway unless it was absolutely necessary. I did get some scholarships, but I had no money for art materials, so I used things like pipes that people threw away from furnaces.

"But," von Rydingsvard hastens to add, "that would be a terrible way of summarizing those years. They were the beginning of my life, or a life in which things began to be

Last year Microsoft selected von Rydingsvard to create an outdoor sculpture for the corporation's headquarters. The result, Skip to My Lou, *is a meandering circular form that invites passersby to nestle into its curves.*

possible." She took art history courses with Meyer Schapiro, heard Philip Guston lecture and dropped painting for sculpture, studying with Ronald Bladen, George Sugarman and Jean Linder. Von Rydingsvard saw how actual artists functioned, and her confidence was reinforced by Bladen's tutelage. "He gave in a way that was so tender and so absolutely aware of the effect that he would have on my psyche," she recalls. "He would go into my studio and be amazed at what was there, and in retrospect, not a whole lot was there. Somehow he was able to see the potential, and in seeing it, he gave me permission, given how I felt about myself, which then moved me."

At Columbia, from which she graduated in 1975, von Rydingsvard was fusing sheets of welded steel with small steel bead made from heating a rod and dripping it onto the sheets as it melted. Perhaps the most significant aspect of this period was the discovery of a craft-oriented process for manipulating an industrial material and giving it a hand-worked texture: she pierced the sheets with holes, hung threads through them, shined them. But the rigidity of steel continued to vex her. In 1976 the artist Michael Mulhern gave her some cedar beams to work with, and she has been faithful to milled lumber ever since. At the time, Minimalism was a reigning influence on many up and-coming artists, but von Rydingsvard distrusted the assertion that an artist could strip an object of its associations. "The Minimalists were too antiseptic and too elegant and too smart for me," she explains. "I wanted something more vernacular. Their attitude put them almost into the realm of philosophers. I like more the carnal, the physical presence of something, rather than the implications of that presence." Where the Minimalists preferred industrial materials and extravagantly smooth finishes, von Rydingsvard embraced the lush organicism of wood and a heavily detailed, expressively textured surface, purposely marked to appear scarred, furrowed and eroded. "I want to take something man-made and have it look as if it isn't.

"To find ways of saving myself in the camps," von Rydingsvard reflects, "I would behave as if I didn't exist." The habit of self-effacement died hard, and it wasn't until she rid herself of it that her art became authoritative. Her first mature work, produced in 1979, was *Song of a Saint (Saint Eulalia)*, a procession of 180 totemlike cedar posts scattered over a hillside at Artpark in Lewiston, New York. "It was the first piece I made in which I was aware of engaging people physically with my work," she recalls. "I was always so worried about what things I should or should not do. There I became outrageous in terms of size." Whenever she can, von Rydingsvard has worked outdoors. "I love working with the land," she says, "making relationships between my piece . . . and the curves of the earth."

Wood was also the key to unlocking the autobiographical and ancestral contents that she has since transmuted into metaphors. In von Rydingsvard's sculptures, an idea about a specific person takes on architectural dimensions; bones become beams and rafters, constructed forms seem to stand for human effort and need. *Ignatz Comes Home* (1986), a spreading rooftop with logs leaning against it, was occasioned by her father's leaving his nursing home for a visit with his wife. The piece is based, she says, "on a kind of vernacular architecture that I append not just to him but to the history of people he was born into." *Zakopane* (1987), a wall piece named for a town in Poland, resembles a choir stall in a rural church and distills the artist's memory of row upon row of peasant women at prayer. *Ursie A's Dream* (1988), triggered by a dream that her daughter had of walking through a row of confessional booths, draws its power from the receding perspective of its base, an extended platform that appears furrowed, like a roughly plowed field. Von Rydingsvard thinks that her way of handling wood is akin to how her father worked the earth with his shovel and plow, and in this sculpture she

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"This part, the cutting and the building," von Rydingsvard says, "is where all the decisions get made."

links three generations—daughter, mother and grandfather.

In the mid-1980s, while von Rydingsvard was evolving her unique visual syntax, the circumstances of her personal life were changing as well. She had continued to teach to support herself, working at different universities around the city until 1982. Then she was appointed assistant professor, and later associate professor, of sculpture at the Yale School of Art. There she also met Paul Greengard, a neuroscientist on the medical school faculty who is now a professor at Rockefeller University. They were married in 1985. Then in March 1988, Exit Art, a gallery that often features artists whose work has been underexposed, gave von Rydingsvard a solo exhibition that transformed her career. The show was a breakout event, financially and critically, with the reviews nearly unanimous in their appreciation of her work's power, presence and autonomy. Von Rydingsvard resigned from Yale later that year and has been able to make a living from her art ever since.

The visibility provided by the Exit Art exhibition led to a 1992 retrospective of her outdoor work in the sculpture garden at Storm King Art Center in Mountainville, New York, and to several invitations to install permanent outdoor sculptures. In 1990, Steven and Nancy Oliver, longtime patrons and collectors who purposely commission for their ranch in California's Sonoma Valley works that "will never be a commodity because they can't be sold or transported," invited von Rydingsvard to add a sculpture to their land, which now contains installations by Judith Shea, Martin Puryear, Richard Serra and Andy Goldsworthy. Von Rydingsvard's sculpture—*Iggy's Pride*—consists of nine wooden wedges inserted into the slope of a hill; the number of wedges alludes to the nine members of her family. When seen from a distance, the work resembles a geological formation.

The Olivers were used to working with artists, but they were not prepared for von Rydingsvard's methods. "She had no drawings. She gave us a verbal description and said, 'You'll just have to trust me.' She was on the ranch for over a year, because of the nature of the work," says Steven Oliver, who is in the construction business. "We had from 7 to 13 people, all doing things with tools that my people were taught not to do." To which von Rydingsvard adds, "Steve and Nancy and Ann Hatch [another private patron] were so at ease with this process, which is so invasive of your time, your space, your life. This is very different from purchasing a piece and putting it inside your house. I warn them that I'm coming with my crew. We are very respectful, but we're there for months. We camp on their land, we use their shower, we eat with them, we send them to the hardware store. I give them immense credit for having this kind of courage. These were huge financial commitments, and it's not work they can sell."

In the 1990s von Rydingsvard's sculpture became less overtly derived from the uncertainties of her childhood. She began to draw instead on archaic Greek sculpture and on non-Western sources of art, such as Asian, Oceanic and African art. *Krasavica*, from 1992-93, is a grouping of five hollowed-out forms whose shape was inspired by a pair of cast-iron samurai stirrups. The incising of the wood (opposite) suggests the rippling of pleated fabric, like an ancient Greek chiton. Two years later, von Rydingsvard made an even greater departure from her past work, experimenting with a new and strange material.

On a visit to a museum, the artist saw a Native American shirt made out of walrus intestines that had been sewn together horizontally. Intrigued by the opaqueness and texture of the material, she was eager to bring those qualities to her own sculpture. Obtaining walrus intestines was, of course, out of the question; the closest available equivalent, it turned out, was cow intestines, which she buys from a meat packer in upstate New York. Von Rydingsvard sews this curious fabric into pendulous "sacs," which seem to connote vulnerability and fertility. One of the most successful integrations of these intestinal pods occurred in her

1996 work *Ocean Floor*, an enormous bowl in which some 50 pairs of sacs are suspended from the upper rim. The sculpture appears tribal in its fetishistic and ornamental aspect, and manifestly tender. The vessel shape hints at metaphors of nourishment and sustenance, and its huge interior space, as well as the swelling roundness and softness of the sacs, alludes to the female body with a forthrightness von Rydingsvard had not previously attempted.

Last year Microsoft's art committee selected von Rydingsvard to create an outdoor sculpture for the corporation's headquarters in Redmond, Washington. The result, *Skip to My Lou*, was installed in December 1997. A meandering circular form, 67 feet in diameter but just 36 inches high, the sculpture invites passersby to nestle into its curves. Since it snakes around a mound of land surrounded by an office complex, the artist explains that she "had to concentrate on the top of the piece, and what people would see when they overlooked it."

Von Rydingsvard isn't sure if *Skip to My Lou* represents a sustained new direction or a tangent in her work. But that distinction isn't an issue for her. "No matter how corny this sounds, my whole world deals with feelings," she says. "A lot of the decisions that I make are intuitively based. The stuff that starts being academic or pedantic I just can't weave my brain into, and I really choose not to. I hope more than ever to be able to dip into that which is not so consciously controlled, to be able to trust myself where things are less predictable. That's where the fun is for me, and that's where I want to go."

This detail of *Krasavica*, a five-part wall sculpture from 1992-93, reveals the complexity of its deeply carved, textured surface.

Avis Berman is the author of Rebels on Eighth Street: Juliana Force and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

AP photographers caught some of this century's best-known images: marines raise the flag on Iwo Jima, 1945, Joe Rosenthal, Pulitzer Prize; Harry S. Truman holds an erroneous early edition, 1948, Byron Rollins; Vietnamese police chief executes Vietcong, 1968, Eddie Adams, Pulitzer Prize; Marilyn Monroe poses as her *Seven Year Itch* film character, 1954, Matty Zimmerman.

THE AP LOOKS BACK

150 YEARS OF CAPTURING THE MOMENT

PHOTOGRAPHS HAVE A WAY OF HELPING US REMEMBER. IMAGES anchor us to events in history or tie us to our cultural past. There are few news organizations that have worked harder to fix such pictures in our memory than the Associated Press. When AP photographer Joe Rosenthal caught the moment that U.S. marines raised the flag over Iwo Jima, no one could have predicted that the image would become an icon, an emblem of victory, reprinted more than any other in the AP's history, reinterpreted into a postage stamp and a World War II memorial. Celebrating its 150th anniversary, the AP, in association with Harry N. Abrams, is publishing *Flash! The Associated Press Covers the World*, an offering of photographs of personalities and events, well known and obscure. These days the AP reaches hundreds of millions of people through more than 15,000 news outlets in 112 nations. But it wasn't always so. The AP was born in 1848 when six competing New York dailies formed a cooperative that would produce one less-costly telegraphic report for every news event. From the beginning, the AP has embraced every technical innovation, from Marconi's wireless to satellites. But it isn't technology that has made the AP a success; it is the reporters and photographers who cover the news. The AP has won 43 Pulitzer Prizes so far. AP reporters are expected to be wherever news is happening, and the standards are high. It was an AP reporter who took down by hand Lincoln's Gettysburg Address; an AP man who held Booth's weapon minutes after Lincoln's assassination and reported the terrible news. AP men and women cover the news in every U.S. county and every country, but at a great cost. On June 24, 1876, Mark Kellogg, assigned to cover Custer's regiment in its confrontation with Sitting Bull, wrote: "By the time this reaches you we would have met and fought the red devils, with what result remains to be seen. I go with Custer and will be at the death." Kellogg was the first AP reporter to die on assignment; 22 others have followed. In the book's introduction, Peter Arnett, a 20-year AP veteran who won a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting from Vietnam, and saw AP colleagues work and die under fire, asks, "What kind of organization can ask that of a person, to permit the risking of life itself for something as transitory as a news story?" His answer: "On reflection, I would say that only a news organization that is very, very sure of its mission." The AP is clear: "Get it first, get it fast, get it right. And be fair."

—Marlane A. Liddell

From small-town U.S.A. to the most exotic cities in the world, AP photographers found the person or action that best defined the moment. In Calcutta, photographer David Longstreath captured a youngster (opposite) as he waited in line outside St. Thomas' Church to file past the glass-encased coffin of Mother Teresa. John Gaps III shot the symbolic ending of the Cold War in 1989, as a man hammered the Berlin Wall (above), the border barrier for 28 years between East and West Germany. And in Dreamy Hollow, West Virginia, 1969, pony driver John Streets paused to pose for Eddie Adams outside an independent coal mine where he earned just $14.80 a day.

Enthusiastic World War II vets returning home from Europe in 1945 filled every porthole of the *Queen Elizabeth* (left) as she pulled up to a pier in New York Harbor, in an unforgettable image by an unknown photographer. David met Goliath (above) in a 1993 photograph by Paul Sakuma as a slip of a boy tried to budge Salevaa Atisanoe (weighing in at 576 pounds), who goes by the sumo name of Konishiki, during the opening ceremonies of a sumo wrestling tournament.

AP photographers have covered everything from sports to war to politics to the environment. Clockwise, from above: In 1991 ash from erupting Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines blocked the midday sun. Itsuo Inouye photographed tribesmen fleeing their villages near the volcano; a 1931 image by an unknown photographer captured national springboard diving champion Georgia Coleman shooting an arrow, which she claimed improved her balance and form; Olga Shalygin froze the moment as Chechen refugee children danced and played next to the train cars their families called home in Nazran, Russia, in 1995; wanting to look good to the local folks, Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson sampled milk directly from a holstein when he visited Pennsylvania State University's farm in 1954—of course, photographer Paul Vathis was there for the perfect political shot.

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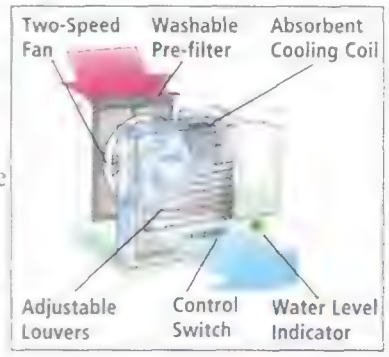
Suffering at a hot desk or work station while others luxuriate in air conditioned comfort? Does your spouse prefer the bedroom warmer than you? Can't use that room that gets extra sun during the day without lowering the air conditioning throughout the whole house? Introducing the *Kool Zone*™ by Slant/Fin, your personal space air cooler. The Kool Zone™ effectively spot cools the area seven feet in front of it by up to 12°. That means that you'll have cool comfort wherever you are any time of the year! The Kool Zone *is not* an air conditioner or a fan. It is a genuine water evaporation cooling system. A quiet two-speed fan pulls warm air from the room, then pushes it through the Kool Zone's cooling chamber at the rate of 70 cubic feet per minute (CFM). Within the cooling chamber, the warm air passes over a revolutionary and patented absorbent evaporative wick. The evaporation cools the wick which then cools the air. Its large capacity water reservoir provides up to 10 hours of uninterrupted cooling, and it costs just pennies per day to operate. It's compact (10½" x 11¼" x 9¼") and light weight (just 7.5lbs.), so it's great for the office, home or anywhere you'd like to be a little cooler. ***$119.95*** ($12.95) #9115. *Special Offer -- Imperial Kool Zone (shown).* Same as above, but with double the cooling width and twice the cool air output (140 CFM). Costs just 10 cents a day to operate. ***$149.95*** ($13.95) #9125.



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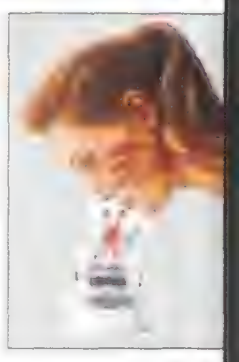

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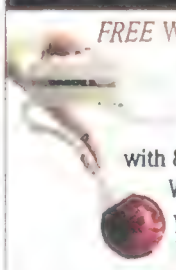

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BY PER OLA & EMILY D'AULAIRE

AROUND the world alone

JOSHUA SLOCUM WAS THE FIRST TO DO IT, A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, THEN WROTE ABOUT IT; THE WORLD IS STILL AWED BY HIS SEAMANSHIP—AND HIS PROSE

The boat, *Spray*, a rerigged 37-foot oyster dredger, held course so well with the wheel lashed—as it is here—that her skipper could spend time below.

AROUND MIDNIGHT, A SMALL, SEA-BATTERED SAILBOAT ghosted her way toward the harbor at Newport, Rhode Island, hugging the shore. The Spanish-American War was raging and the harbor entrance had been mined, but her helmsman—and sole occupant—reckoned he would be safe in shoal water. No warship, friend or foe, would risk going aground on the rocks that lurked close beneath the surface.

Peering into the darkness, he worked the boat into the inner harbor, dropped anchor, furled her battered sails, went below, sank into his berth and slept the sleep of the dead. The boat was *Spray*, and her exhausted, 54-year-old skipper, Joshua Slocum, had just become the first man to sail alone around the world. It was 1 A.M., June 27, 1898.

The extraordinary journey took more than three years and covered a watery distance of 46,000 miles. With only a compass, some old charts, a sextant and a hunk of lead on a line to measure depth, plus a windup tin clock to help keep track of time during trackless passages, Slocum had faced huge seas, deadly currents, jagged reefs that could have torn the bottom out of *Spray* at the wink of an eye, pirates (once), savages (six times), as well as the stark loneliness of being at sea for months on end, requiring reserves of discipline and energy that we can now hardly imagine.

It was a historic moment. And next month, 100 years later, in honor of the man and boat, sailors and yacht clubs and whole harbors from Newport to Boston, from Gibraltar to Australia (there are Joshua Slocum Societies on three continents), will give speeches, dance hornpipes, sing sea chanteys and hold boat races, some sailing replicas of *Spray*, whose numbers have increased as the anniversary approaches. But in 1898 Slocum's return went largely unnoticed. Nobody had heard from him for months; he had sailed away all but defeated and virtually bankrupt. America was busy becoming a world power at the expense of colonial Spain.

His first wife, Virginia, a crack shot and sailing comrade, died before he set out.

A local reporter did note that *Spray*, not seen in American waters for years, had come home. Buried beneath news of the war, the story only made page three of the June 28, 1898, Newport *Herald*, a slight that still outrages Slocum aficionados. "Imagine!" Carlton Pinheiro, curator at the Herreshoff Marine Museum in Bristol, Rhode Island, snorts, pulling out some old news clips. "Slocum's feat was as remarkable in its time as putting a man on the moon."

One problem was that for quite a while, people had a hard time believing that he and *Spray* had actually done what he claimed they had done. Sail a zigzag course 46,000 miles across the world's oceans alone in a crude wooden boat with only rudimentary equipment? Impossible! "There are sailors today who won't go south of Newport without radar, loran, depth sounder, GPS and other electronic gear," Pinheiro explains. "It's not surprising that people a hundred years ago were skeptical." It was only when the doubters got to examine Slocum's meticulous logs and *Spray*'s papers stamped in 20-odd ports and the dozen countries she had visited around the world that they really believed him.

Slocum's character is still something of an enigma. He is world famous among people who care about sailing and the sea, a vastly expanding group thanks to Dacron and the kind of gear Pinheiro makes note of. He is even more famous among legions of readers, sailors and landlubbers alike, who keep finding, and being amazed by, *Sailing Alone Around the World*, his classic account of the journey. First serialized in magazine form, then published in both New York and London in 1900, the book has been translated into more than six languages and is still very much in print after a hundred years.

As a writer Slocum is given to plain understatement, dry wit, wry humor and Yankee observations about nature that led some to call him a "sea-locked Thoreau." Now and then he offers descriptive glances at the sea, in storm or calm, that can rival those of Joseph Conrad—all the more remarkable given that Slocum never went to school beyond the third grade. He had an arduous life that made him tough and sea-wise in

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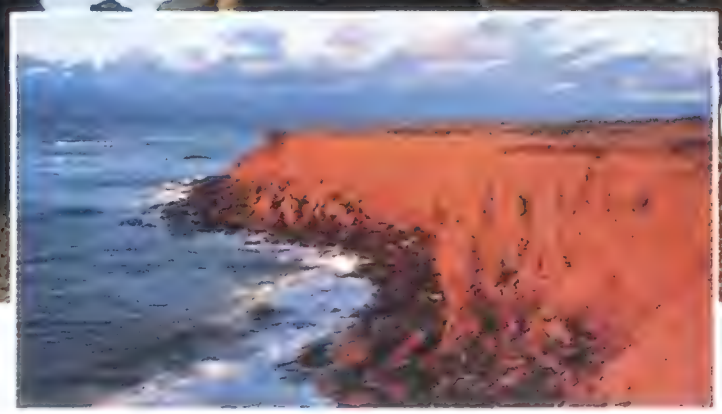

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Spray's progress around the world from Boston to Newport included a backtrack after the Strait of Magellan (inset) where storms forced Slocum to circle back and try the passage again.

the extreme, but hardly explains the graceful and sophisticated writer that he became.

He grew up poor in Nova Scotia with a hard-driving father, who farmed and then took to boot making, a sickly mother and ten brothers and sisters. Big for his age, at 16 he ran away to sea, shipping aboard a British trading vessel bound for Liverpool. He taught himself celestial navigation and how to use a sextant. By 18, he had made second mate. At 25, in 1869, he was a full captain on a coastal schooner and had become an American citizen.

In 1871, while his square-rigger was unloading cargo in Sydney, Australia, young Captain Slocum met American-born Virginia Walker, 20, and after a three-week courtship, he married her. She suffered from a weak heart but shared Slocum's love for the sea, and for 13 years, until her death, she sailed with him wherever he went, sometimes perching in the ship's stern picking off sharks with a rifle. She learned to use the sextant, and taught their children to read and write during long passages carrying timber from the Philippines to China, coal to Shanghai, gunpowder to Taiwan, freshwater ice from the Aleutians to Hong Kong. She was also musical and insisted on having an upright piano bolted to the deck.

Three of their seven children died in infancy at sea. "My Dear little baby died the other day," Virginia wrote to her mother from the Philippines when her sixth child perished in 1879. "Dear Josh embalmed her in brandy for we would not leave her in this horrid place."

The pinnacle of Slocum's career as a captain came at age 37 with command and part ownership of the 220-foot clipper ship *Northern Light*, "the finest American sailing ship afloat," he would call her. But the age of steam was just then bearing down on the age of sail. By the time she needed expensive refitting, it no longer made economic sense. Slocum had to sell his share and watch his pride and joy, her masts amputated, be turned into a coal barge, "towed by the nose from port to port," he wrote.

From that point his life began to go downhill. He bought the *Aquidneck*, a small three-masted bark, and sailed out of Baltimore with Virginia, the four children and a load of flour, bound for South America. There Virginia's heart gave out. In July of 1884 she died while the ship was moored off Buenos Aires. Slocum never really recovered. Had she lived, he would never have wound up alone on *Spray*. He rowed her body ashore for burial in Buenos Aires' English Cemetery. From that day on, their youngest son later wrote, "my father was like a ship with a broken rudder."

Two years after Virginia's death, he met and married Bostonian Henrietta Elliot. Those were hard and practical times. He had children to worry about. He was 42, to her a dashing seaman; she was 24, to him a pretty seamstress. Hettie was a good woman and Slocum said so. But, as son Garfield observed of his father, "he and Hettie didn't pull on the same rope." Off the Brazilian coast, the *Aquidneck* struck a sandbar and broke up. Henrietta, four members of the family, and the crew rowed ashore while Slocum, like Robinson Crusoe, returned again and again to salvage whatever he could. The uninsured vessel was a total loss.

The crew was soon picked up by a passing vessel bound for Montevideo, Uruguay. Using only crude hand tools, Slocum and his sons built a

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An early proof of Slocum's penchant for nautical pioneering was *Liberdade*, built from local timber with hand tools after an 1887 wreck stranded him and his young family.

primitive Swiss Family Robinson shelter, then spent months jerry-building a frail vessel out of native timber and stuff scrounged from the wreck. A tarpaulin supported on a bamboo frame provided the "cabin" for the boat, which was rigged like a Chinese junk. Because he launched her on May 13, 1888, the day when all Brazilian slaves were freed, Slocum christened her *Liberdade*, then set sail for home.

It was great training for his later travels in *Spray*. Squalls blew them off course. Shoals threatened. A whale seemed bent on sinking them. Yet Slocum and his family sailed 5,500 miles in 55 days, to make a perfect landfall, anchoring in a small river to the north of Cape Roman, South Carolina, on October 28, 1888. In December they reached the mouth of the Potomac and sailed up to Washington, D.C. Slocum later offered *Liberdade* to the Smithsonian Institution and it went on temporary display.

In just five years, Slocum had lost everything. Virginia, his ship, almost all his money. There were no sea commands to be had, at least not on sailing ships. All he could find were odd jobs in shipyards. At age 48 he was even reduced to looking for work as a stevedore on the waterfront. One blustery March day down on the docks in East Boston, an old friend, Eben Pierce, by then a wealthy retired whaling captain, took pity on him. "Come to Fairhaven," Pierce said, "and I'll give you a ship," adding slyly, "but she wants some repairs."

Fairhaven lies across the Acushnet River from New Bedford, and when Slocum turned up there it looked as if Pierce was playing a cruel joke on him. Instead of a working vessel tied up at a dock, he found a rotting, century-old Chesapeake oyster sloop high and dry in a field. You could barely make out the name painted on her battered stern: *Spray*.

It was no joke, however. Says Myra Lopes, the Slocum Society historian who lives near Fairhaven where Slocum discovered his dubious gift, and where a bronze monument in his honor stands today: "Pierce said right out he'd take Slocum into his house and pay for the supplies while Slocum rebuilt the wreck. I think he figured if anyone could make something of the hulk, Joshua Slocum could."

Spray did not "want some repairs." She needed a complete rebuilding. With his children mostly grown and Hettie living with a sister in Boston, the captain set to work entirely alone.

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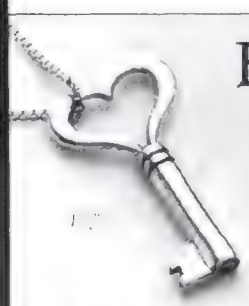

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"Breaking 'er up, I s'pose?" one man offered. "No," Slocum replied briefly, "going to rebuild her."

Using hand tools and a steam box for bending wood, he cut tough pasture oak that grew nearby, and ordered a shipment of yellow pine for planking. Retired whaling captains with time on their hands often crossed the bridge from New Bedford to watch. "Breaking 'er up, I s'pose?" one seaman offered. "No," Slocum replied briefly, "going to rebuild her."

It took 13 months. "*Spray* changed so gradually that it was hard to say at what point the old died or the new took birth," he wrote. He added two cabins that stood three feet above deck, providing plenty of headroom below and no forward portholes for the seas to smash. In April 1894, he launched her, remarking with obvious pride that "she sat on the water like a swan." Soon, with her mainsail flying from a mast of stout New Hampshire spruce, Slocum and Pierce took *Spray* across Buzzards Bay on a shakedown cruise. Both were pleased at how she handled. Total cost of the venture: $553.62.

Slocum never says exactly when he made his extraordinary decision to sail around the world alone. "I was born in the breezes, and I had studied the sea as perhaps few men have studied it," he writes, noting that after a season of unsuccessful coastal fishing in the restored *Spray*, "the time arrived to weigh anchor and get to sea in earnest." He had already been around the world five times on bigger ships and was familiar with prevailing trade winds and currents, and he judged the rebuilt *Spray* as seaworthy as the large commercial sailing ships he had commanded for decades. According to newspaper reports at the time, Slocum initially invited Hettie to join him—a gesture he surely knew would be rejected. Her reply: "Joshua, I've had a v'yage."

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Clad in hat and jacket, as always, Slocum leans nonchalantly on *Spray*'s boom in Buenos Aires in 1896, where he added a small mizzenmast to help in heavy weather.

With reason, he had great faith in his stamina; if necessary, he could stay at the helm for many days on end. He had found *Spray* so perfectly balanced that, with helm lashed and sails properly trimmed, she could hold a true course by herself on some points of sail. In Boston during the winter of 1894-95 he painted in bold black letters on her transom: *Spray Boston*. People around the world, he figured, would be more likely to recognize Boston than Fairhaven.

On April 24, 1895, as the noon whistle sounded over East Boston Harbor, Slocum "weighed anchor, set sail, and filled away. . . . The day was perfect," he wrote, "the sunlight clear and strong. Every particle of water thrown into the air became a gem, and the *Spray*, making good her name as she dashed ahead, snatched necklace after necklace from the sea, and as often threw them away."

Perhaps having second thoughts, he sailed northward along the coast to Nova Scotia. Only on July 2 did he steer eastward across the Atlantic. A few days out, pea soup fog blanketed the small boat and her captain. Then and ever afterward he had the greatest confidence in *Spray*. "Still," he wrote in his log, "in the dismal fog I felt myself drifting into loneliness, an insect on a straw in the midst of the elements." To combat his solitude, he sang sea chanteys and, when the fog lifted, began a practice he kept for the whole voyage: talking to the moon. He also gave orders as if to an imaginary crew, then scrambled to carry them out himself. When he rested in his cabin, he shouted to a nonexistent helmsman: "How does she head, there? Is she on her course?"

Spray's ability to hold her course for days with her wheel lashed gave her captain time to sleep and read. His library—including books by Darwin, Longfellow and Shakespeare—was lined up neatly in shelves by his bunk. He had stocked his hold with six months' stores and dined on biscuits (cooked on a two-burner oil lamp that doubled as a stove), potatoes, dried cod, coffee and cream—a menu to which he added any flying fish unfortunate enough to land on deck.

Slocum's plan was to circle the globe west to east. But in Gibraltar, British naval officers warned him that the Mediterranean was swarming with pirates. A small ship sailed by a single man didn't stand a chance of

reaching the recently cut Suez Canal. So back he headed across the Atlantic, setting a course for Brazil. There were, he reasoned, two directions in which to sail around the world.

A sudden gale drove him near shore off the North African coast where pirates lay in wait. Looking aft, he spotted a sinister Moorish felucca with a single triangular sail bearing down on *Spray*. When Slocum changed course, so did the felucca, a sure sign that she was a pirate.

The winds rose. Slocum knew he had to take in sail or risk being dismasted by the storm, pirates or no pirates. He took in two reefs. The pirates were so close that he could make out the faces of the men aboard. But, unlike *Spray*, the pirate ship was carrying too much sail. A sudden gust swung the felucca broadside to the sea just as a large wave crashed over her, snapping off her mast. *Spray*'s boom was also damaged, and Slocum was barely able to get away while the pirates struggled to retrieve their rigging from the water.

It was the first of many narrow escapes. Perhaps he created his own luck. Endurance, patience, an uncanny ability to read the mood of the sea, plus a sense of contentment with himself and his ship were key ingredients. "Slocum sailed at times for more than 70 days at a stretch with no one to talk to but himself," says Judith Lund of the New Bedford Whaling Museum. "Single-handed sailors these days often have autopilots, radios, phones, e-mail, computers, emergency locator beacons—even VCRs for entertainment. It's hard for us to imagine in today's age of instant communication just how totally cut off Slocum was."

Forty days from Gibraltar, Slocum reached the northeast coast of Brazil, then headed south to Rio de Janeiro. Next stop, Buenos Aires, where Virginia was buried. There he shortened *Spray*'s bowsprit and added a mizzenmast with a small sail to handle her

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An artist's cutaway view of *Spray* shows the interior with well-stocked bookshelves. Slocum cooked in the forward cabin; the barrels held water and supplies, including plenty of potatoes. The ship's wheel is just forward of the mizzenmast.

better in the stormy southern ocean. Returning to *Spray*, he wrote, "Weak as it may seem, I gave way to my feelings." No doubt, he broke down and wept.

Back at sea, Slocum shaped his course for the Strait of Magellan, an infamous 400-mile passage separating, to the north, the South American mainland and, to the south, the wild reaches of Tierra del Fuego—named for the signal fires marauding bands of savages lit along the shore. Slocum entered the strait on February 11, 1896, and was greeted with nature's worst: howling headwinds, foul currents, sudden williwaws—bursts of compressed wind that screamed down the mountainsides like avalanches of air with enough force to knock a ship over on her beam-ends.

Things weren't much better when conditions quieted. Good weather brought with it renegade bands of native Fuegan outlaws in canoes, bent on plunder, mayhem and murder. Slocum had been warned of their presence and had a trick or two up his sleeve. When he saw the Fuegans paddling their canoes toward him, he ducked into the after cabin, quickly changed his clothes and emerged from the forward cabin looking, he hoped, like a different person. He hurried below again and, using the length of bowsprit that he had cut off earlier, made a "scarecrow" that he dressed in sailor's clothes. He tied the fabrication to the forward mast-stay and hooked a line to it that he yanked every so often to make it move. To the Fuegans there now appeared to be three men aboard. When the nearest canoe was 80 yards away, Slocum grabbed his Martini-Henry rifle—one of two weapons he carried—and fired a shot across its bow. The marauders withdrew.

"It's hard to imagine in today's age of instant communication just how cut off Slocum was."

After weeks of sailing in winds that blew him backward as much as forward, the lone sailor finally reached the western end of the strait, where he "felt the throb of the great ocean that lay before me." The Pacific waters that greeted him were seething crests of mountainous waves that "showed white teeth." Hurricane-force winds shredded his sails. "Hail and sleet in the fierce squalls cut my flesh til the blood trickled over my face," he wrote. He was driven southward for four days under bare poles as he worked to repair his sails.

It was dark when the gale finally subsided. Exhausted, Slocum made a near-fatal mistake. Believing himself near the tip of Cape Horn, he hoisted what sail he had and turned eastward, planning to go back around the cape and try again (see map, p. 122). His reckoning was way off; *Spray* was still a hundred miles north of the cape. In the inky blackness, he steered blindly toward one of the deadliest coastlines in the world. Throughout the night, in places where, according to his reckoning, no breakers should have been, he heard the roar of breakers on all sides

of his little craft. He steered by sound alone, avoiding the areas where the seas thundered loudest.

When daylight came, Slocum discovered he was in the middle of a lethal stretch of water off the west coast of Tierra del Fuego called the Milky Way, named for the maelstrom of white water caused by waves crashing over shallow rocks. "God knows how my vessel escaped," he wrote. Even in daylight, threading his way through the rocky maze was a challenge. Finally, Slocum entered Cockburn Channel and cut northward again to rejoin the Strait of Magellan at its halfway point.

Exhausted after four days at the helm, he dropped anchor in a quiet cove. Aware that he was back in Fuegan territory, before going below to sleep, he scattered a bag of carpet tacks on deck, business end up. Around midnight he was roused by loud howls and the sound of people jumping into the frigid water. The Fuegans had tried to sneak aboard his boat while he slept, and stepped on the tacks with their bare feet. Slocum hurried on deck and fired into the air several times to speed their departure.

After navigating the second half of the strait again, he finally sailed into the open Pacific more than two months after entering the strait. English geographer W. S. Barclay considered three passages through the Strait of Magellan worthy of a place in history: Magellan's, Sir Francis Drake's—and Joshua Slocum's. In terms of pure seamanship, Barclay rated Slocum's passage the most remarkable of all because he made his journey alone.

Shaping his course toward the north, Slocum headed for the place in the Juan Fernández Islands that had inspired Daniel Defoe—one of his favorite authors—to write *Robinson Crusoe*. He found it "a lovely spot," and remarked, "There are no serpents on the island, and no wild beasts. . . . The people lived without the use of rum or beer. . . . There was not a police officer or a lawyer among them."

After a pleasant stay, he caught the trade winds and headed for Samoa, thousands of miles away. Sails mended, he was able to relax, read and sleep while *Spray* held a true course for weeks at a time. When he made landfall at Samoa, Slocum and *Spray* had been alone at sea for 72 days. There he met with Fanny Stevenson, widow of the great storyteller (SMITHSONIAN, August 1995), and so enjoyed the South Seas hospitality that when he left the island a month later, he wrote, "a sense of loneliness seized upon me as the islands faded astern, and as a remedy for it I crowded on sail for lovely Australia."

It was in Australia that *Spray*'s proud owner and captain hit upon the idea of earning his keep by lecturing to the public about his voyage. Using a projector powered by an electric arc, he showed black-and-white slides on screens at local meeting halls, and was soon performing to full houses. Entry fee: sixpence per person. He charged the same for people to board and examine *Spray*. From that point on, he wrote, he "lectured *Spray* around the world." Wherever he put into port, the news of his exploits preceded him, bringing invitations to hobnob with the rich and powerful. He delighted in surprising people, showing them he was a man of letters, a thinking person, not just a dirty old sailor.

In South Africa, he met the powerful and headstrong president of the republic, Johannes Paulus Kruger. When Slocum explained his voyage around the world, a glowering Kruger interrupted him, insisting the world was flat. "You don't mean *round* the world," Kruger raged. "Impossible! You mean *in* the world." Nothing could budge the stubborn Boer's belief even though, Slocum said, "[I] made curves with my hands," trying to illustrate the true shape of a globe.

Throughout Slocum's journey he was showered with gifts ranging from jams and jellies to sails. Most of the

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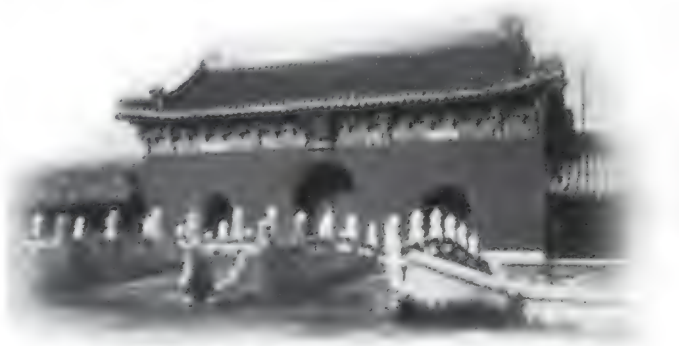

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Slocum's second wife, Henrietta, decided against making the big trip with him.

gifts were useful. But Slocum's first port of call after rounding the Cape of Good Hope was the island of St. Helena, where Napoleon died in exile. There a well-wisher presented him with a goat.

Slocum didn't believe animals belonged aboard ships, either as pets or as livestock, but didn't want to be rude. Initially, he rather liked the animal's company. But after getting its sea legs, the creature became, as Slocum noted, the "incarnation of evil, threatening to devour everything from flying-jib to the stern davits." It ate Slocum's favorite straw hat. "This last unkind stroke," he wrote, "decided his fate."

But ever since his voyage through the desolate Strait of Magellan, where all life hung by the thinnest thread, Slocum was "in no mood to make one less life in the world." His first order of business when he reached Ascension Island was to give the goat to a local farmer.

On May 8, 1898, Slocum crossed his own wake, the one he had made three years earlier sailing from Gibraltar to Brazil. Technically he had now sailed around the world, but he did not consider the task complete until he reached American soil.

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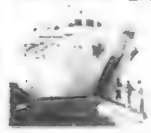

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The battleship *Oregon*, a harbinger of the Spanish-American War, came up astern. Without binoculars, he at first had trouble reading her signal flags. Finally he made out the symbols, C B T, which meant, "Are there any men-of-war about?" Slocum raised a flag signifying "No," then, his sense of irony aroused, added flags: "Let's keep together for our mutual protection." The *Oregon* steamed haughtily over the horizon, without reply.

Shortly afterward, he was becalmed in the Sargasso Sea for eight days while his "sail flapped limp." Then, heavy gales blew up, propelling him into the Gulf Stream where the winds piled up mountainous waves and cross seas. Slocum, who rarely complained, wrote that he was "at last tired, tired, tired of battling squalls and fretful cobble seas." Just off New York's Long Island, Slocum was hit with what he called the "climax storm of the voyage"—a tempest that destroyed buildings ashore and tore ships from their moorings in New York Harbor; *Spray* rode it out under bare poles with sea anchor set to keep her bow into the waves. Hailstones pelted him; lightning spiked the sea around him; and big gusts nearly knocked *Spray* flat. Even with her sails down, she shuddered and groaned. Slocum wondered if he'd come this far only to perish within sight of his goal.

Once again *Spray* proved her seaworthiness and weathered the final challenge. Tired but triumphant, her captain raised tattered sails and slipped into Newport Harbor to the quietest reception he'd received on the entire voyage.

There was, however, one last thing that Slocum had to do before he could consider his voyage complete. On July 3, 1898, he and *Spray* "waltzed beautifully" up the Acushnet River to her birthplace in Fairhaven. There he tied her to the same cedar pile that had held her when she was launched. "I could bring her no nearer to home," he concluded.

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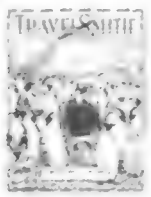

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Using notes from his lecture tours and entries from the ship's logs, Slocum spent several months living aboard *Spray* to write *Sailing Alone Around the World*. In Slocum's lifetime people bought thousands of copies, some from the old Yankee skipper himself as he peddled them off his boat. After his barely heralded return to Newport, the book brought him fame and admiration. Slocum was invited to meet President Theodore Roosevelt at the White House and was treated as a celebrity wherever he went. With the income from his book, and from the lectures he continued to give up and down the East Coast, he bought a modest farm in West Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard. But just as he couldn't adapt to the age of steam, he couldn't adjust to a life ashore.

He was happiest aboard *Spray*, which he kept moored in Vineyard Haven. Starting in 1906, he became the first "snowbird," sailing single-handedly to the Caribbean each winter, "to avoid buying an overcoat," he proclaimed.

Slocum wrote that he was "at last tired, tired, tired of battling squalls and fretful cobble seas."

On November 14, 1909, at 65, an age when most men are slowing down, Slocum hoisted sail at Vineyard Haven a final time. His destination: Venezuela, where he hoped to sail up the Orinoco River and search for the headwaters of the Amazon. He cast off, circled the island a couple of times, then disappeared over the horizon in a rising gale, bound for warmer waters. He was never heard from again.

There are many theories about Slocum's disappearance. Some believe his boat, which in later years he neglected to maintain as carefully as he once had, foundered in a howling nor'easter that arose shortly after his departure. Others reckon that *Spray*, with her faint kerosene running lamp, was run down at night by a steamer as she crossed the shipping lanes.

To add to the mystery, a Caribbean planter reported that Slocum had visited him late in 1909. A few days later, while boarding an island steamer, the planter noticed a gouge in the boat's side just above the waterline. When he asked the crew what had caused it, they admitted they had inadvertently run down a small boat in the night, but it was OK because it was empty and adrift, its helm unmanned. When the planter asked what the boat looked like, the description was like that of *Spray*. Says Judith Lund, "Since Slocum often went below for sleep and let the boat sail on her own, it could well have looked like there was no one on board."

Lund has heard another story that bolsters that theory. A postmistress on Martha's Vineyard reported that she received a letter for Mrs. Slocum postmarked from an island well below the shipping lanes. Not knowing where Hettie was when the letter arrived, she set it aside. Soon after, the post office burned down—and with it the letter that might have helped solve the mystery of Joshua Slocum's death.

For next month's celebrations to mark the centennial of Slocum's round-the-world voyage, the Joshua Slocum Society International (JSSI), based in Bethel, Connecticut, expects thousands of Slocum fans to turn up in Bristol and Newport, Rhode Island, and Fairhaven, Massachusetts. As Mike Martel of the JSSI puts it: "Slocum's book did more to promote small boat sailing and voyaging for the common man than any book that's ever been written. Slocum had a tremendous influence, and continues to, to this day."

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In Slocum's favorite picture, *Spray* sails "full and by" with all canvas drawing well.

called Voyage of the Spray, founded by former teacher David Dunn, is raising money, hoping to sail students in Slocum's wake. Taking aboard a qualified captain and crew, as well as teachers for each of the 30 legs of the voyage, Dunn plans to follow Slocum's route and timetable, while involving legions of schoolchildren the world over via a satellite link to the Internet (voyageofthespray.ua.edu).

The notion is not unlike one of Slocum's own. "My plan," Slocum wrote a friend in 1897, "will be to sail a 'college' ship around the world. How I would like to teach young people in the science of Nautical Astronomy."

Slocum's farmhouse still stands in West Tisbury. Two fan corals, faded souvenirs from *Spray*'s famous voyage, flank the front door. A bronze plaque, almost invisible, sits behind a vine-covered fence that surrounds the property. A visitor has to look carefully to find it. Beneath the captain's name it states, "Lost at Sea, 1909."

That was the way Slocum would have wanted it.

Per Ola and Emily d'Aulaire have written for SMITHSONIAN *on subjects ranging from freight trains to cathedrals; Per Ola is a small boat sailor.*

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Cod: A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World

Mark Kurlansky

Walker, $21

"NOT A WHALE, NOTHING," SAYS A cod fisherman in Petty Harbor, Newfoundland, squinting forlornly out into the Atlantic, toward Ireland. And who is to blame for the dearth of cod?

By the end of Mark Kurlansky's *Cod*, we know nobody is to blame, except the entire human race, and only because we are such phenomenally proficient predators. Also, the cod are gone because Englishmen crave fish and chips, and Basques want a codfish dish called *bacalao a la Vizcaina* and kids need cod-liver oil and New Englanders have always had a hankering for cod chowder, which Daniel Webster once orated upon in the U.S. Senate.

By the end of *Cod*, we know why Kurlansky subtitles his book *A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World*. In an afterword he gives us 600 years of cod recipes, such as Norwegian dried cod soaked in lye. He provides asides, too, on arcane and intriguing subjects, such as Iceland's dispute over eating cod heads. In 1914, a prominent banker subjected cod-head ingestion to economic analysis (based on a mathematical formula that factored in eating time) and proclaimed the practice nutritionally inefficient. The director of that country's national library countered with a treatise on cod-head-eating's social values, such as the ancient Icelandic belief that it increases intelligence.

But Kurlansky also ponders why the Atlantic cod, which can grow as big as a heavyweight boxer and once thrived by the millions in the North Sea and off Iceland, and on the Grand Banks and the Georges Bank, is now commercially extinct almost everywhere. This book is a cod-angled look at European and North American history. And, as Kurlansky says of the bereft Petty Harbor fishermen, "they are at the wrong end of a 1,000-year fishing spree."

Emile Zola, in 1873, wrote of "salt cod, spreading itself before the drab, hefty shop keepers, making them dream of departure, of travel." History's first known cod-powered traveler, as Kurlansky tells it, was Eirik the Red, thrown out of Norway, with his father, for murder. Eirik and his dad traveled to Iceland, "where they killed more people and were again expelled," too empathically challenged even for Vikings. The bloodthirsty band pushed on to Greenland. And in about 985 Eirik's son, Leif, pushed on to North America. They survived, says Kurlansky, because the Vikings had learned to "preserve codfish by hanging it in the frosty winter air until it lost four-fifths of its weight and became a durable woodlike plank." What they didn't break off and eat themselves, the Vikings traded in northern Europe.

Aboard an Icelandic fishing vessel, a deckhand proudly displays a colossal cod, c. 1925.

But medieval Basques were the top cod traders. They were whalers, able to travel vast distances whaling because they had learned to salt-cure cod, a better technique than the Vikings' air-drying. They also had a secret source: by the year 1000, the Basques were supplying a vast international market in cod, based on their fishing fleet's surreptitious voyages across the Atlantic to North America's fishing banks, a cod cornucopia about which they kept mum. By 1532, British fishermen were fighting the Hanseatic League in the first of history's many cod wars. By 1550, sixty percent of all fish eaten in Europe was cod.

Kurlansky surveys history from a cod point of view. The Pilgrims, it turns out, planned to thrive by catching cod in Cape Cod Bay, although they knew so little about fishing that they neglected to bring along much tackle. They did not know how to farm, either. Fortunately, they became proficient at pillaging their Indian neighbors' food caches. Capt. John Smith got famous in Virginia, but he would get rich catching cod off New England. Cod fed Caribbean plantation slaves. Cod also fed the Union Army.

Darwin's champion, T. H. Huxley, served on three British fishing commissions, arguing that herring (and by extension, cod) could never be fished out—nature, in the Victorian view, being indestructible. Cod do find lots to eat, swimming with their huge mouths open, ingesting whatever goes in. In 1994 a Dutch fisherman caught a cod with a set of dentures in its belly.

But the species is stable only if each female, in her lifetime, produces at least two offspring that survive. And humans grew ever more efficient at

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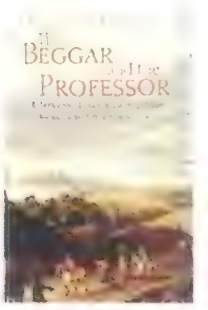
catching cod. With steam engines, Clarence Birdseye's invention of frozen foods, diesels, invincible trawler nets, fish-finding sonar gear, giant factory ships—cod never had a chance. Now former cod fishermen, victims of their own proficiency, forlornly hope for the fish's return.

"Is this the last of wild food?" Kurlansky wonders. Icelanders still fish for cod, but mostly they eat haddock. As a Reykjavik chef explains, "We don't eat money."

Reviewer Richard Wolkomir writes from his home in Vermont.



The Beggar and the Professor: A Sixteenth-Century Family Saga

Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, translated by Arthur Goldhammer

University of Chicago Press, $30

"PAPA," SAID FELIX PLATTER, THE most eminent physician of Basel, Switzerland, one day, "why don't you write down the story of your life?"

Old Thomas Platter, still vigorous in his 70s (he was about to embark on a second marriage that would produce six children), was happy enough to sit down and write out in his rough, racy Swiss-German dialect stories he had been repeating for years to anyone who would listen. He had indeed worked his way up from nothing, from herding goats and starving, from begging his way across Germany, from stealing an occasional goose

Along the way, he had learned a trade, started a business and bought a house in the most fashionable part of town. And he had saved enough money to put his son through medical school, buy land and build a secondary residence in the suburbs, and become one of the leading citizens of Basel—a rags-to-riches story of which the world has seen so many in the past couple of centuries. What is unique about this one is that it was written

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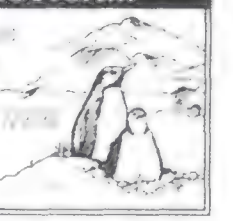

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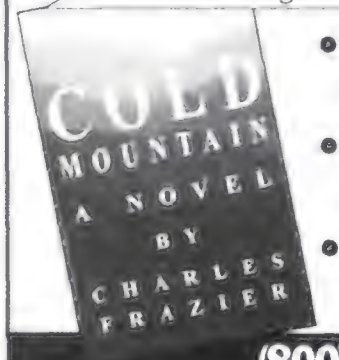

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in 1570, and precious little remotely like it had ever been written before.

His two sons (born 35 years apart), Felix and Thomas, Jr., who also became a doctor, wrote books about their experiences, too, and together the Platters' writings form a treasure house of information about life as it was lived down on the ground at what scholars correctly perceive as one of the turning points of world history.

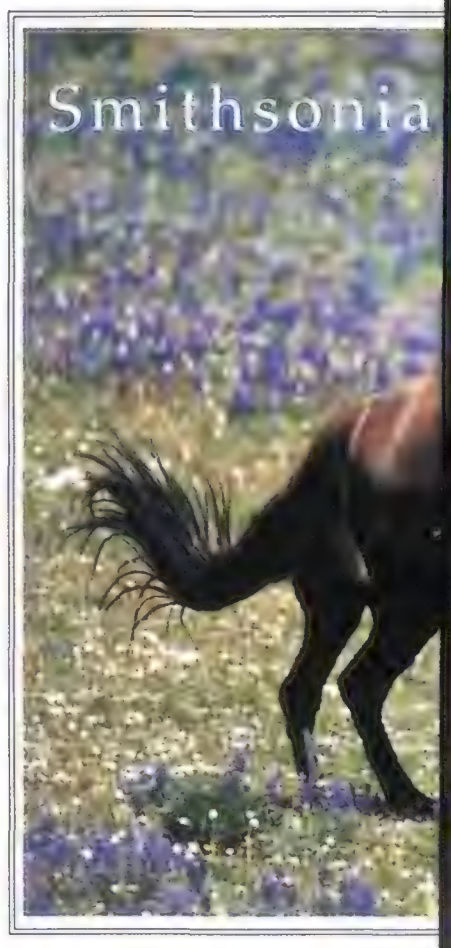
A NEW WORLD ORDER

EMMANUEL LE ROY LADURIE, THE distinguished French historian, has, in his book *Montaillou*, demonstrated his ability to ferret out of ancient documents lively and realistic pictures of daily life in a far-off medieval past (SMITHSONIAN, March 1978).

Now he has used the reminiscences of the three Platters to do the same for the 16th century. At that moment, the changeless patterns of medieval life (in the case of villages like Montaillou, patterns that went back thousands of years) began breaking up, and the modern Western world, the world almost everyone lives in today, began to emerge.

The 16th century in western Europe was in so many ways a prefiguration of the 20th: rising prosperity, rising population, rising prices, an immense expansion of physical and intellectual horizons, a globalization of the economy, revolutions in religion and the arts and technology and social structures and ways of looking at the world. The dark specter of increasing poverty, crime, new and horrifying diseases, ferocious ideological wars and persecutions also loomed.

The Platters were only marginally aware of these vast changes going on around them, but they knew how to take advantage of them. Like most people of all times and places, they were chiefly concerned with their local and immediate needs and desires. They were aware of the discovery of America, but the only way they perceived it was through the



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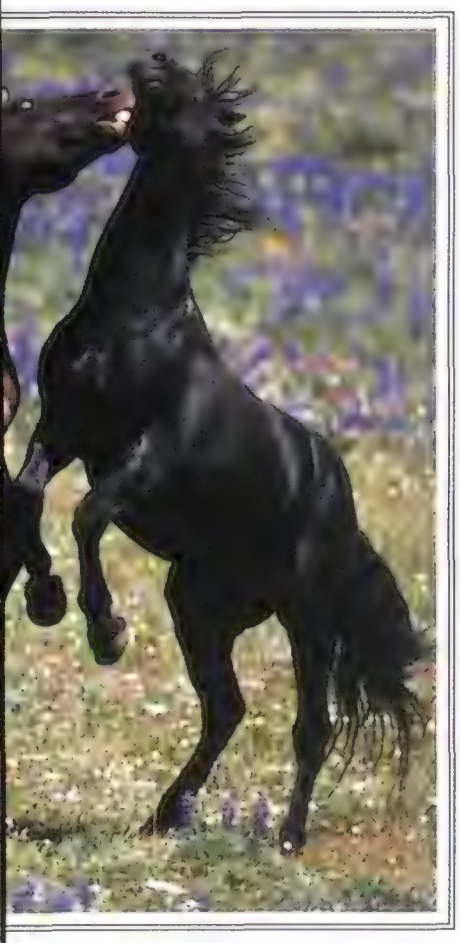

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presence of new phenomena in their daily lives, such as Brazil nuts or turkeys. When Felix Platter once was shown a statue of Joan of Arc, who had been burned barely a century before, he had no idea who she was.

But in their daily choice of what to do and how to do it, they were very aware of what was going on. Thomas Platter knew that in these new days of expansion and the revival of learning, it was economically advantageous to know how to read books, and that the recent invention of Mr. Gutenberg's in Germany had made books for the first time in human history available to all kinds of people, not just the thin upper crust. He may not have known that this invention lay at the cutting edge of technology (long before jet aircraft, Gutenberg had used titanium in his ink) and was going to change the world, as drastically as the steam engine would change it two centuries later and electronics in our own time.

A SELF-TAUGHT SCHOLAR

BUT HE KNEW THAT HE HAD TO learn how to read and to write—Latin of course, it was the only respectable language—and he learned when he was 19 or 20. He learned it while he was rope-making, hiding his copy of Plautus in the heaps of hemp he was braiding into rope. He learned Hebrew and Greek, which were being rediscovered after centuries of loss, and he earned his living for a while by teaching Basel's top intellectual brass the Hebrew lessons that he had learned by himself in books the night before.

What kept him going (and his sons, too), obstinately and single-mindedly and with remarkable success, was the desire to work up, one step at a time, the social and economic ladder. He was intent upon using his brains, his skills and his boundless ambitions to keep acquiring not only more money, but also more ease and comfort and respect and recognition. There have always been people trying

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to be upwardly mobile, but before the advent of the 16th century, few cared to talk about them and they rarely wrote down their own stories because poor children never learned how to read and write.

PURSUING PROSPERITY

THOMAS PLATTER REMEMBERED TOO well the bottomless sea of poverty and filth and ignorance out of which he had come, the sea in which his ancestors and almost everyone else had lived for thousands of years. He did whatever he could to survive. He made soap, he made ropes; eventually he had the foresight to take up printing. He was self-taught, but he learned enough to print one of the key works of the Protestant Reformation, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* by John Calvin, a copy of which can be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, without a single page turned yellow after 450 years. He speculated in real estate; he planted vineyards where there had been only barren land; he gave lessons and took in boarders to pay off his debts; he became headmaster of a school; he became (in Basel, at least) a leading citizen, a celebrity.

His little son Felix worked for him when he started his printing business, folding paper till his fingers bled. But compared with his father, he was born in luxury. He rode horseback while his father walked (his father, a tough old bird, could cover more miles in a day on foot over the primitive Swiss roads than Herr Doktor Professor Felix could in the saddle). Felix identified in advance, says Le Roy Ladurie, "with the professors of medicine, the deans and rectors who treated dukes and princes, the important academics whom he saw strutting down the streets of Basel in their velvet costumes, followed by servants on horseback." Before he was 35 he was one of them, rector of the medical school at Basel University, famous throughout the medical world for his pioneer studies of the retina of the

human eye, and for having created one of the first museums of natural history. That early collection of unusual objects contained everything from rare stones to Native American moccasins, stuffed crocodiles to a live elk.

For another century or more the Platters would count among the quality, the top people of Basel. They were, of course, selfish and ambitious, but they were not bad people; they lived the life of their times. Thomas might be merciless in his money dealings, but when a pair of destitute refugees arrived in Basel from Munich, thrown out of their home because they were Protestants, and came to his door, he recognized the soap-maker and his wife who had given him a roof to sleep under 35 years before. Thomas had been a shoeless, homeless beggar, fighting dogs for food and scratching between floorboards for crumbs of bread; he took the couple in and sheltered them to the end of their lives.

The Platters, as they come across in this book, had plenty to put up with in their lives. There were famines and the heartless cruelties of ideological wars, and above all the repeated visits of the plague, which took the lives of seven of Thomas Platter's ten children.

Still, they had achieved their main goal, which was to be better off in their old age than in their youth. And as they moved into a new century, they left a richer, more dynamic, more enlightened world behind them than the one they were born into.

Reviewer Robert Wernick, a frequent contributor to SMITHSONIAN, *is based in Paris.*

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Joshua Slocum [p. 118]

Joshua Slocum Society International, 15 Codfish Hill Rd. Ext., Bethel, Connecticut 06801, 203-790-6616, e-mail: mmc@loa.com

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One scientist's vision revolutionizes the hearing industry, benefiting millions of people...

Crystal Ear® uses sophisticated electronics to provide affordable, cosmetically-pleasing and easy-to-use hearing amplification.

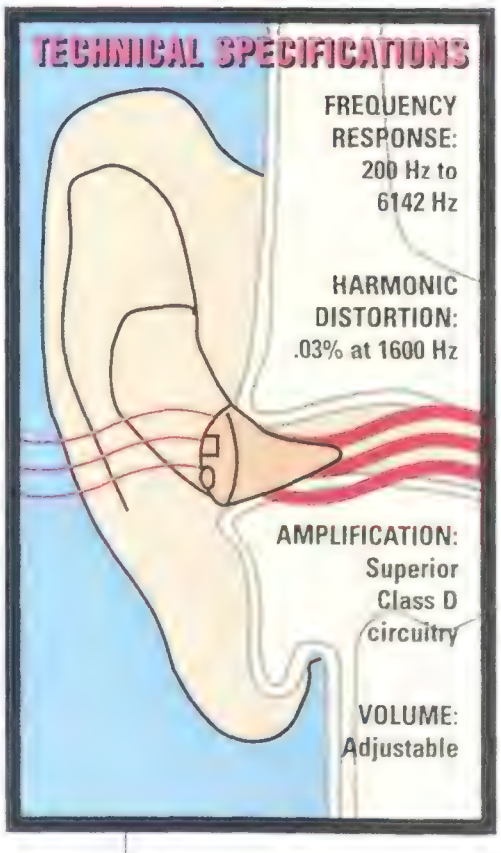
by Harold Sturman

One day a friend asked my wife Jill if I had a hearing aid. "He certainly does," replied Jill, "Me!" After hearing about a remarkable new product, Jill finally got up the nerve to ask me if I'd ever thought about getting a hearing aid. "No way," I said. "It would make me look 20 years older and cost a fortune." "No, no," she replied. "This is entirely different. It's not a hearing aid...it's Crystal Ear!"

No one will know. Jill was right. Crystal Ear *is* different—not the bulky, old-styled body-worn or over-the-ear aid, but an advanced personal sound system so small it's like contacts for your ears. And Crystal Ear is super-sensitive and powerful, too. You will hear sounds your ears have been missing for years. Crystal Ear will make speech louder, and the sound is pure and natural.

I couldn't believe how tiny it is. It is smaller than the tip of my little finger and it's almost invisible when worn. There are no wires, no behind-the-ear devices. Put it in your ear and its ready-to-wear mold fits comfortably. Since it's not too loud or too tight, you may even forget that you're wearing it! Use it at work or at play. And if your hearing problem is worse in certain situations, use Crystal Ear only when you need it.

A fraction of the price. Hearing loss is the world's number-one health problem, but in most cases it goes completely untreated. For many millions of people, hearing devices are way too expensive, and the retail middlemen want to keep it that way. What's more, treating hearing loss the old retail way can involve numerous office visits, expensive testing and adjustments to fit your ear. Thanks to Crystal Ear, the "sound solution" is now affordable and convenient. Almost 90% of people with mild hearing loss, and millions more with just a little hearing dropoff, can be dramatically helped with Crystal Ear. Plus, its superior design is energy-efficient, so batteries can last months, not just weeks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NEW! **American Snapshots: Blackstone River Valley (Rhode Island)** *October 15-18* Visit historic towns and communities.

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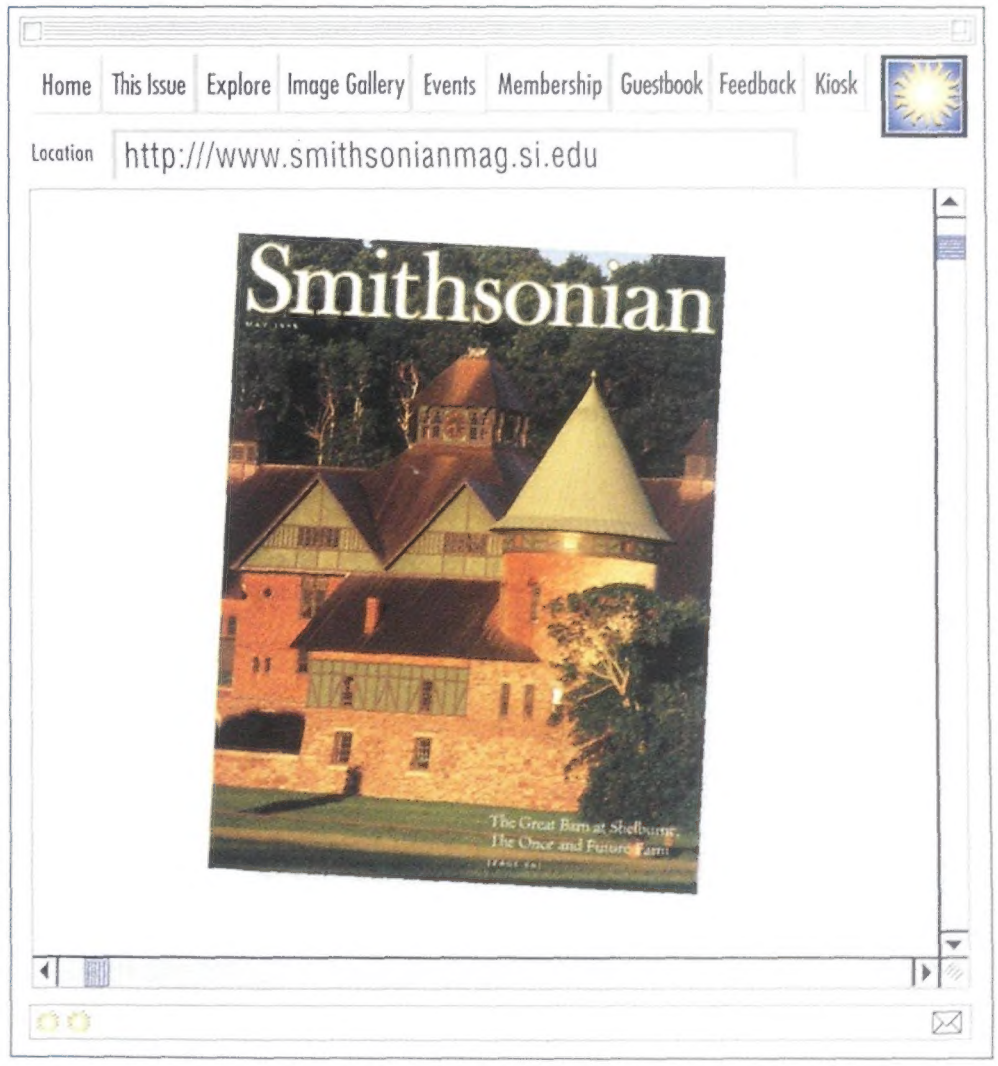

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THE LAST PAGE

Growing Pains

BY GERALD DUMAS

ONE OF THE REASONS I STARTED a large vegetable garden years ago was a happy thought that this would be one area I'd not have to mow. I don't know what idiocy made me think I'd be getting out of some work. Beyond all the labor involved, growing vegetables requires vigilance.

I've dallied with cabbage, romanced spinach and flirted with asparagus, but my one true love is the tomato. My problem is the competition. Half the creatures that crawl, walk or fly eat tomatoes, and unlike me, they have nothing much else to do.

We live an hour's drive from New York City and you'd think wildlife would be no bother. Besides, the garden is protected by fence, screen and brick. Outside the fence, I grow snapdragons to discourage our furry friends from glancing in and getting all excited. Yet here is what I saw one day last summer between dawn and dusk, their beady eyes fixed on my comestibles: five rabbits; a scurry of squirrels; a mother woodchuck and her two young; a scold of irritated blue jays; a murder of crows; three raccoons; a vole; and deer of all sizes.

Last year, I added a variety of tomato new to me: Brandywine. I started the seeds indoors, transferred the plants to my cold frame in a timely fashion, readied fish fertilizer and cages, lined the fence perimeter with pest repellent, hung soap on twine from the posts, and sank the plants, 54 in all, into the garden in May. As the Brandywines turned pink so did I, my cheeks flushed with pride and expectation. Each morning, inspecting, I tenderly felt their heft. One beauty, fairly bursting to become a two-pounder, I marked for a future photo session.

Then one day I found Mama Woodchuck laying waste to my Brandywines; she dived into a nifty hole I'd never seen before. I noticed tomatoes with bites in them, one per tomato. I lifted a leaf and found a field mouse, who either was blinded by the sudden light or else winked at me. I heard cawing, looked up, and saw six crows hunching along a crab-apple branch. Crows are savvy critters, but like the squirrels in our peach tree, they take one taste and move on.

I bought a cunning plastic replica of a great horned owl, a forbidding, fierce-looking bird of prey that crows, and most other pests, fear, and I wired it to a post. Above the tomato plants, I arranged netting and anchored it with 30 spikes. Satisfied, I turned away and found myself face-to-face with the owl, which I'd forgotten about, and nearly jumped out of my clogs.

Five days later, back from a calming seaside respite, I found two sputtering crows stomping around beneath the netting and a third making comments from his perch on the owl's head. The pair on the ground had been crafty enough to break in, but apparently were too dumb to find the way out.

Many of my Brandywines had been vandalized, but the prize specimen was untouched. I asked around about vegetable contests without any luck, so I had my wife take ten pictures of me while I held the tomato next to my ear, so future generations could judge its girth. Then I ate it.

A month later, a magazine asked me to provide a photograph for their contributors' page. I sorted through the ten Brandywine shots and sent the one that seemed most impressive, and they published it. Wouldn't you know, they cropped out the tomato.

"Half the creatures that crawl, walk or fly eat tomatoes . . ."

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